Daily Report

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Arab-Israeli Talks

Sources: Oslo Talks Fail To Resolve Differences

NC2012121693 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1140 GMT 20 Dec 93

[Text] Tunis, 20 Dec (MENA)—Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat today received the Palestinian delegation that had conducted talks with an Israeli delegation headed by Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres in Oslo over the past two days.

The Palestinian delegation, which returned to Tunis early today, briefed 'Arafat on the results of the discussions with the Israeli delegation.

Palestinian sources stated that the negotiations with the Israelis had made no progress and had failed to find any solutions for unresolved issues, namely control over the border crossings, the size of the Jericho area, and Israeli settlements.

The Palestinian delegation disclosed no other details about the meetings with the Israelis.

The Palestinian delegation included Yasir 'Abd-Rabbuh, PLO Executive Committee member; Ahmad Quray' alias Abu-'Ala', director of the PLO Economic Department; and Nabil Sha'th, President 'Arafat's political adviser.

'Deadlock' in Oslo, 10 Differences

NC2012135493 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1312 GMT 20 Dec 93

[Text] Tunis, 20 Dec (MENA)—PLO Executive Committee member 'Ali Ishaq has stated that the Oslo negotiations between the Palestinian and Israeli parties "have reached a deadlock" due to Israel's intransigence. He said there are 10 major differences between the two sides, primarily the issue of Israeli security in the occupied territories. In a statement following 'Arafat's meeting with the Palestinian negotiators, Ishaq said the Oslo negotiations were "a grinding battle without weapons."

Ishaq, who participated in the meeting between 'Arafat and the Palestinian negotiators, pointed out that if Israel remains intransigent on the efforts to implement the Palestinian-Israeli Declaration of Principles, the PLO will call for an urgent meeting of the Arab foreign ministers to adopt a unified Arab position on Israel's intransigence. He said the PLO will also call on the two cosponsors of the peace process—the United States and Russia—to intervene to save the negotiations on implementing the Palestinian-Israeli Declaration of Principles agreement signed in Washington on 13 September. Ishaq said he believed that despite the acute differences between the two sides, it is possible for them to resume negotiations.

A prominent Palestinian official who declined to reveal his name belittled the differences between the two sides, noting that there are solutions to the existing differences. He pointed out that both parties should make concessions to reach a "compromise." He said that both sides have an interest in making the agreement succeed, adding that the negotiations between the two parties cannot tolerate a long postponement.

'Abbas: 'Partial Agreement' Reached on Issues

NC2112075493 Paris AFP in English 0030 GMT 21 Dec 93

[Excerpt] Rabat, Dec 21 (AFP)—Israeli and Palestinians negotiators reached "partial agreement" on some key issues holding up autonomy for Palestinians in Jericho and the Gaza Strip, a senior PLO executive said here late Monday [20 December].

Mahmud 'Abbas, alias Abu-Mazin, a member of the Palestine Liberation Organisation executive council, said the tentative agreement concerned "part of the four contentious points" blocking implementation of the Declaration of Principles signed on September 13 in Washington.

He declined to say which areas were concerned by the "compromises" reached in Oslo on Sunday during talks organised to find a way out of the stalemate.

"The differences were clarified in detail in Oslo where each side was able to explain its point of view. During the course of the negotiations, agreement on a few points emerged on the one hand while differences remained on the other," Abu-Mazin said.

He conceded however that there were still "profound differences on the main issues".

"Don't ask me to go into what was agreed," he told members of the Press Club of Morocco.

Abu-Mazin said the main obstacles concerned the control of the borders separating the future autonomous regions from Egypt and Jordan and the future of Jewish settlements in the occupied territories.

Israel wants to retain control of the border crossings from Egypt into the Gaza Strip and along the ceasefire line from Jordan to Jericho on the West Bank.

Asked about a planned meeting in Paris Tuesday between PLO chief Yasir 'Arafat and Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres, Abu-Mazin said this was only "a project" which "might be postponed".

However in Tunis, Arafat himself confirmed Monday night that the meeting would go ahead.

Abu-Mazin said if the meeting took place "the two sides will be discussing the same subjects that were dealt with in Oslo with a view to settling the contentious issues once and for good," Abu-Mazin said.

He said the two sides would have to find "a half-way solution establishing Palestinian sovereignty on the one hand and ensuring peace and security for Israel on the other".

Abu-Mazin said he was "optimistic" but he warned that "delays in carrying out the Declaration of Principles and foot-dragging on the Israelis' part could jeopardize the peace process." [passage omitted]

Taxation Agreements Reached Between Israel, PLO

TA1912135593 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 19 Dec 93 p A2

[Report by Nitzan Horowitz and Judy Maltz]

[Text] In Paris, the Israeli and Palestinian economic delegations have reached agreements in principle regarding the transfer of authority for direct tax collection to the autonomy institutions. According to the main agreement, direct taxes such as income and company taxes will be collected on a territorial basis. This means that Israelis working in the autonomy areas will pay taxes to the autonomy authorities, while residents of the territories working in Israel will pay the Israeli tax authorities. Israelis and Palestinians working in Jewish settlements beyond the Green Line will also pay taxes to the Israeli authorities.

Regarding companies operating within the autonomy areas, it was decided that if more than 50 percent of the control over the company is in Israeli investors' hands, the company will pay taxes to the Israeli tax authorities; while if more than 50 percent is in the hands of Palestinian investors, the company will be taxed by the autonomy authorities.

The Israeli and the PLO delegations reached an understanding according to which the agreement will include a general clause in the framework of which the Palestinians will pledge not to take taxation steps that might have an effect on the Israeli economy. In return, Israel has agreed to grant tax breaks to residents of the territories working on its territory in the shape of tax exempts and deductions.

The parties also agreed to establish a body that will coordinate the transfer of authority regarding direct taxation from the Civil Administration to the autonomy authorities. This body will also deal with problematic cases of residents of the territories that have not been treated yet.

Paris (exclusive to HA'ARETZ)—Members of the Palestinian delegation to the Paris economic talks have confirmed that understandings have been reached and progress has been made on joint customs with Israel. At the same time, they expressed reservations about Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres' declaration in Paris that an agreement was reached on the establishment of a fully open market. The Palestinians stressed that a lot of progress has been made on the issue of customs, but there is still disagreement on the issue of currency.

The Palestinians are asking for the right to issue an independent currency during the interim period, but they stress that they do not intend to make the move right away, saying they are aware of the need to first set up an appropriate economic infrastructure. "We are asking for the right to issue our own currency," a senior Palestinian delegate said.

Members of the Palestinian delegation also protested remarks by Peres according to which the PLO does not distinguish between income from internal sources which is supposed to be designated for the self-government budgets, and income from external sources, earmarked for investments. According to them, the PLO is definitely aware of the difference between the two sources and does not intend to finance the self-government operations with investment funds. At the same time, they said that external aid will be needed for the period of organizing the autonomy institutions, mainly in the first year. Ahmad Abu-al-'Ala' [Ahmad Quray'], head of the Palestinian delegation to the economic committee, asked for such aid in the World Bank meeting in Paris last weekend.

"Any government, as well as us, must finance its activities out of the taxes it collects. We have announced that we will not stop collecting taxes in the territories and we are committed to this," a senior Palestinian delegate said.

Referring to car imports—an irregularity in the joint customs system—Palestinian delegates said that the change in tariffs on cars imported into the territories will not necessarily be downwards. "Why should we flood our market with cheap cars when we badly need the income from customs, particularly when cars are not all that important to us?" a delegation member said. "The Israelis love new cars, but we have more important things." At the same time, the delegate said that the heads of the PLO economic organ do not want the Palestinian public in the territories to be aware of this issue at this time.

The Palestinian delegates said they will regard the issue of agricultural and food products as important in view of the differences in economic parameters between Israel and the territories. Israelis spend some 25 percent of their salaries on food products, while the Palestinians spend some 50 percent.

The Palestinian delegation also expressed its reservations about remarks by Foreign Ministry Director General Uri Savir who, speaking at the World Bank conference, said that international aid to the territories is linked with progress in the Israeli-PLO negotiations. They said that Savir's remark sounded like a warning to the Palestinians that they had better hurry and reach an agreement with Israel, or else they will receive no aid. "International aid will start coming in when we form our economic institutions in the field. Naturally, this is linked with agreements with Israel, but it cannot be

viewed as a precondition of any kind. We reject the carrot and stick method," a Palestinian delegate said.

Inter-Arab Affairs

League Envoy To Visit Iraq, Discuss POW's

NC2012172993 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1620 GMT 20 Dec 93

[Text] Cairo, 20 Dec (MENA)—Iraq has agreed to receive Rashid Idris, envoy of Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid, secretary general of the Arab League, on a mission to follow up the issue of the Kuwaiti prisoners and detained people in Iraq. Dr. Nabil Najm, Iraq's permanent envoy to the Arab League, conveyed the Iraqi position to Dr. 'Abd-al-Majid today. Idris is due to arrive in Baghdad in January.

An Arab League source said that Idris's mission in Iraq is part of the League's effort to resolve the problem of Kuwaiti prisoners and detainees.

Palestinian Affairs

PLO: Israeli Withdrawal, Crossings Key Issues

NC2012172893 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1535 GMT 20 Dec 93

[Text] Tunis, 20 Dec (MENA)—The PLO Executive Committee stated that it considers Israel's withdrawal from the Jericho area and the Gaza Strip and allowing Palestinian supervision of the crossing points leading to the Palestinian territories to be the central issue that would show Israel's seriousness about its commitment to the Declaration of Principles. The PLO Executive Committee issued a statement after a meeting today led by Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat. The committee discussed a report by the Palestinian delegation that participated in the meetings of the Palestinian-Israeli Liaison Committee in Oslo yesterday and the day before yesterday. The statement emphasized that this issue is the key to discussing the other basic issues, particularly defining the temporary location of the settlements within the framework of the existing populated areas.

The PLO Executive Committee declared its disapproval [istihjan] of the Israeli stances and statements that try to sideline the substantial differences and buy time, noting Israel's failure to comply with implementing the agreement according to the timetable specified in it. The statement said that Israel seeks to turn the withdrawal steps and Palestinian supervision of the crossing points into mere formalities. The PLO Executive Committee said that it instructed the Palestinian delegation to adhere to the substance and text of the agreement to achieve Israeli withdrawal and Palestinian control of the crossing points and reject all partial and nominal solutions.

'Arafat Sends 'Urgent' Message to Mubarak

NC2112000993 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 0500 GMT 21 Dec 93

[Text] Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat has sent an urgent message to President Husni Mubarak on developments in the Palestinian-Israeli negotiations to implement the PLO-Israeli Declaration of Principles. Egyptian Ambassador to Tunis Ibrahim 'Allam said this after meeting 'Arafat. He said the Palestinian president asked him to convey the message to Mubarak. He explained that this is part of Egypt's effort to advance the peace process and surmount the obstacles to the implementation of the Palestinian-Israeli agreement. The ambassador said 'Arafat informed him of the results of the Palestinian-Israeli Liaison Committee meeting in Oslo over the past two days.

Territories Leader Says 'Arafat Career Near End

LA2112112693 Tel Aviv 'AL HAMISHMAR in Hebrew 21 Dec 93 p 2

[Report by Yosef Galili]

[Text] Yesterday Dr. Muhyi 'Urayqat, one of the prominent Palestinian leaders in the territories, told Jewish parliamentarians attending a convention organized by the Knesset and the Israeli Forum [not further specified] that PLO Chairman Yasir 'Arafat is approaching the end of his career.

'Urayqat added that 'Arafat is not suited to head a state and that he in fact completed his role in Palestinian history by bringing about the Oslo agreement and the ceremony on the White House lawn in which he shook hands with Prime Minister Rabin.

'Urayqat claims that, contrary to the general impression, 'Arafat is not surrounded by yes-men and Palestinian leaders do not hesitate to criticize him. He added: "After the autonomy in the territories is established, 'Arafat will no longer head the Palestinian entity."

Radical Group Warns Christmas Pilgrims

NC2012153993 Paris AFP in English 1354 GMT 20 Dec 93

[Text] Beirut, Dec 20 (AFP)—A radical Palestinian group warned Monday [20 December] that pilgrims may not be safe travelling to the Holy Land over the Christmas season.

"The Palestinian people cannot guarantee the safety of pilgrims during the holiday season, especially in Jerusalem, at a time when they are waging a legitimate war of self-defence against the Israeli occupying forces," said the Fatah-Intifadah led by Palestinian dissident Abu-Musa [Sa'id Musa Muragha].

"We ask all those planning to travel to the Holy Land to take into consideration their safety," the Damascus-based group added in a statement published here.

"The Holy Land will not be ready to receive them and guarantee their safety until Christian and Moslem holy places are freed from Zionism," it added.

Fatah-Intifadah is one of 10 radical Palestinian factions opposed to the September 13 PLO-Israeli accord for limited autonomy in the occupied Gaza Strip and West Bank town of Jericho.

Jordan Fatah Members Demand Pay, Threaten Action

JN1912105293 Amman SAWT AL-SHA'B in Arabic 19 Dec 93 pp 1, 18

[By Riyad Mansur]

[Text] Amman—The Fatah Movement's members in Jordan have threatened that they would, as of 21 December, take severe measures to paralyze the PLO establishments in which they work unless Yasir 'Arafat orders that their salaries, suspended since last August, are dispensed to them, and unless their health insurance services, suspended for the past eight months, are restored.

The new threat was issued yesterday morning during a sit-in in front of the Palestinian embassy in 'Amman by the members of the Fatah Movement, which is led by 'Arafat himself. The embassy closed its doors to prevent the protesters from entering the premises. The protesters handed the ambassador, al-Tayyib 'Abd-al-Rahim, a memorandum to Yasir 'Arafat outlining their demands.

Three PFLP Leaders Join Fatah Movement

TA2012074293 Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1 Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 19 Dec 93

[Text] Sources in the Tunis-PLO leadership have informed our correspondent Yoni Ben-Menahem that three Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine [PFLP] leaders—Jalal 'Azzah, Hasan al-'Amudi, and Su'ib 'Ammar—recently turned into Fatah activists and supporters of the Israeli-Palestinian accord. It is worth noting that the three are Gaza Strip residents who are currently abroad.

Habash, Others on Accord, 'Arafat's 'Treason'

JN1612185093 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 16 Dec 93 p 7

[Report by correspondent Sulayman Nimr on interviews with George Habash, secretary general of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, and other Palestinian leaders in Damascus—date not given]

[Excerpt] [passage omitted] In an interview, Dr. George Habash, secretary general of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine [PFLP], admits to AL-HAYAH that the majority of Palestinians in refugee camps and outside the occupied territories are experiencing a state of frustration and hopelessness. He says: "When the Palestinian masses see Yasir 'Arafat and his group signing an agreement with the Israeli enemy such as the Gaza-Jericho agreement, they will definitely feel desperate, especially since they see no chances for having the rotten situation of the PLO institutions rectified, and they see how these institutions are being penetrated by the Israeli Mosad and its agents. How could our people and masses avoid feeling desperate when they hear the Israeli enemy saying it is protecting the life of Yasir 'Arafat? Yet, we cannot deny that many years ago, 'Arafat himself was viewed by the Palestinian masses as a national symbol.

"However, be assured that this frustration is temporary. Certainly, desperateness will create an explosion that will blow away all those who betrayed the people's cause and agreed to sign an agreement that wastes our land and rights.

"However, vis-a-vis this frustration that you have sensed among the Palestinian people outside the occupied territory, look at the masses of the Palestinian people inside the occupied territories, in Gaza and the West. They are continuing their intifadah despite 'Arafat's call for a end of it. Look at martyr 'Imad 'Aql and other martyrs who recently fell. They continued struggle against the enemy and the occupation. Our people inside the occupied territories are the ones who are suffering, struggling, and resisting the enemy. They explicitly reject the agreement and continue resistance. Look at the results of the Bir Zayt university elections, in which the agreement's opponents won. (The candidates of the coalition between the PFLP and the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine together with the Hamas candidates won all seats of the student council against the Fatah candidates). Look at the recent poll in Nabulus. In a previous poll, they said that 60 percent of the Palestinian people support the agreement. That was before the Palestinian people got to know the facts of the agreement. However, last week's poll showed the percentage of the agreement's supporters dropped to as low as 25 percent.

" 'Arafat deceived the world. He said that the Palestinian people approve his agreement with the enemy. He arranged for this with the trick of holding PLO Executive Committee and Central Council meetings with those attending. The United States is fully aware of the game that 'Arafat has played to show that the agreement has won the required approval. So where is the democracy that the United States claims to defend? We called for a referendum on the agreement among the masses of the Palestinian people in the occupied territories, Jordan, Syria, and Lebanon. Those constitute approximately 80 percent of all the Palestinian people. Why did they reject that proposal? Because they are sure the majority of our people reject the agreement."

[Nimr] Reactions to the declaration of the agreement indicate that Palestinians inside [the occupied territories] welcomed the agreement and took to the streets, carrying Palestinian flags and Yasir 'Arafat's pictures.

[Habash] They told our masses there that the agreement would lead to an Israeli withdrawal from Gaza and Jericho, that the United States and the world countries would guarantee the withdrawal, and that the whole

world would help the Palestinian people build their economy and their institutions. They also told our masses outside the occupied homeland that the majority of them would return during the first stage, that they would be able to get rid of their sufferings with the Arab regimes and their organizations, and that they should think of quickly investing their money, which will rain on the Palestinian people to enable them to build their homeland and their future rule. Therefore, the masses staged rallies to welcome withdrawal.

But when the truth was revealed, matters become clear and our people discovered the huge price they would pay if they accepted the agreement. So, our Palestinian people inside the occupied territories resumed the intifadah, and clashes with settlers and the occupation soldiers occurred everywhere. Our people outside the occupied territories, as you have just mentioned, despaired. They were frustrated and shocked when they knew the facts of the 'Arafat- Rabin agreement. But this shock, as I have said, will alert them to new facts, foremost of which is the need to restore the PLO from the traitors.

[Nimr] What is your role in that?

[Habash] We will struggle vigorously with all that we possess against that agreement. We will rely on the masses. As Palestinian organizations, we will be their instrument. Hence, it is important for the 10 Palestinian factions that oppose the agreement to form one front that will include our brothers in Hamas and the Islamic Jihad in order to deprive 'Arafat and his group of legitimacy, to restore the PLO, its national line, its charter, and its national program, and to foil the agreement.

[Nimr] Does this mean that you want to topple Yasir 'Arafat and his group in the PLO leadership instead of establishing an alternative PLO?

[Habash] I said that we want to topple the legitimacy of 'Arafat and his group. They, however, fell down when they concluded the Gaza-Jericho agreement, which conflicts with the principles of the Palestinian National Charter on which the PLO itself was founded.

[Nimr] But, international legitimacy recognizes Yasir 'Arafat's leadership of the PLO?

[Habash] National legitimacy is more important that international legitimacy. When the world knows that our Palestinian people reject the agreement and refuse to allow those who signed it to remain the people's leaders, the international legitimacy will recognize what our people choose.

[Nimr] What is your personal opinion of Yasir 'Arafat?

[Habash] History will register that 'Arafat has committed national treason against our people and their struggle and against every martyr who fell for the sake of Palestine. History will register that 'Arafat betrayed every martyr's mother, who offered her son to this revolution for the sake of repatriation and the expulsion of the occupiers. History has no mercy on traitors. [Habash remarks end here]

AL-HAYAH interviewed leaders of other opposition Palestinian organizations in Damascus. The statements of those officials are no different from what Dr. Habash said concerning the current Palestinian situation. However, the question is: What is the alternative?

All agree that the alternative is to continue and escalate the intifadah. Nayif Hawatimah, secretary general of the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine, said: "There is no doubt that there is large-scale international support for the Gaza-Jericho accord. The continuation of the intifadah with its world dynamics will prove that this agreement will not survive and will not bring about real peace or stability. This will make the Israeli occupation and all forces supporting the agreement reach the conviction that there will be no stability without establishing an independent Palestinian state, with Jerusalem as its capital, and without finding a just solution to the problem of the Palestinian refugees."

Dr. Habash said the national Palestinian organizations, including the PFLP, should make an assessment of Palestinian action in order to come up with a clear vision. This should be taken within the framework of a national and pan-Arab working program to confront the dangers of the Gaza-Jericho accord and reiterate our adherence to the national principles for which our people waged its struggle and offered sacrifices and martyrs.

Does this mean that the Palestinian organizations, which reject the Oslo agreement, will review their methods of action? And will some of these organizations resort to underground action, particularly since the atmosphere in the region does not allow the Palestinian organizations to wage open military and political action?

In light of the dialogues AL-HAYAH newspaper conducted with the Palestinian opposition organizations, it seems that there is unanimity that the political and military activity of these organizations will focus on action inside the occupied territories in order to support and continue the intifadah. And "if 'Arafat tries to stop them and prevents us from our legitimate struggle against the occupation, we will stand against him."

Ahmad Jibril, secretary general of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command, said his front will struggle against Israel from southern Lebanon in coordination with the Lebanese resistance in southern Lebanon.

An Islamic Jihad movement official in Damascus said: "Since we declared ourselves through our jihad operations inside the occupied territories, we have been depending on our underground organization, which will pursue the Zionist enemy and its supporters and the supporters of those who signed the agreement. It will also be ready to liquidate those who try to confront us."

[Nimr] Can we conclude that the Islamic Jihad will try to assassinate 'Arafat and his group?

The Islamic Jihad official said: "Any traitor of the Palestine question will be punished by another Khalid Islambuli [assassin of Egyptian President Anwar al-Sadat] one day and will pay the price."

He added: "They say there will be no choice for the Palestinian people other than this agreement, and despite this lie, should we not punish those who tried to impose that choice?"

DFLP-PFLP Unified Command: End Infighting

JN2012192693 (Clandestine) Al-Quds Palestinian Arab Radio in Arabic 1801 GMT 20 Dec 93

[Text] A spokesman for the Unified Command of the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine [DFLP] and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine [PFLP] today urged a halt to the ongoing clashes among the sons of the one people in the Gaza Strip. He also called for repudiating all forms of fighting, and for aiming all rifles at the Zionist enemy and its settlers.

In a statement, the spokesman added that the Unified Command is of the opinion that all political differences among the sons of the Palestinian people should be resolved through democratic dialogue.

Hamas, PFLP Leaders on Legislative Elections

JN1812192893 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1700 GMT 18 Dec 93

[Report from the occupied territories by Bassam Abu-Sumayyah]

[Excerpt] [passage omitted] Two Palestinian officials from Hamas and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine [PFLP], which oppose the Palestinian-Israeli accord, have announced their support for participating in general legislative elections to elect national authority in the occupied territory. The two officials were answering a question on their stand vis-a-vis the elections to be held next July to elect a Palestinian authority in accordance with the Israeli-Palestinian Declaration of Principles.

Hamas spiritual leader Shaykh Ahmad Yasin, who is spending a life sentence in Israeli jails, said he supports participation in legislative elections after verifying their objectives, conditions, and circumstances. Yasin said in a statement he made from his prison: I support participation in legislative, not administrative, elections. He added: Hamas, which enjoys the support of 40 percent of the Palestinian masses, seeks to establish an Islamic state and society based on full liberties.

PFLP supporter Dr. Riyad al-Maliki said: The PFLP supports the holding of general national legislative elections for all the Palestinian people everywhere, provided these elections are not linked with the talks or their results. Al-Maliki said: Why do we not speak about Palestine National Council elections and begin by electing its members from inside the occupied territory, instead of speaking about electing members for the self-rule council?

Palestinian sources disclosed that figures close to the PLO leadership are working to prepare the first Islamic Palestinian party in the occupied territory called the Islamic Arab Party [al-hizb al-'arabi al-islami] to be headquartered in Jerusalem. The party announced in the foundation document its readiness to participate in the self-rule authority. The sources added that among the founders of the party are Fatah supporters, who are known for their Islamic trends, such as Ghazi al-Husayni, member of the Fatah Revolutionary Council and the brother of Faysal al-Husayni, the senior official in charge of Fatah in the occupied territory.

Hamas Said Focusing on Political Structure

LD2012201893 Jerusalem New Channel 2 Television Network in Hebrew 1800 GMT 20 Dec 93

[Yoram Bin-Nur video report]

[Excerpts] Following the return of the deportees to the territories, the Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] organization intends to strengthen its base of political support. Today, Hamas activists said that under certain conditions, a cease-fire with Israel could be possible. Our correspondent in the territories Yoram Bin-Nur reports on the Hamas redeployment. [passage omitted]

In recent months, Hamas has been strengthening the organization's overt political structure and the members of the Muslim Brotherhood in the territories hope the return of the deportees, which enjoys the support of the majority of the population, will contribute to the strengthening of Hamas in the Palestinian street. [passage omitted]

In the coming weeks, Hamas will focus on strengthening and refurbishing its political structure, using funds channeled from Iranian sources. As for the struggle against Israel, the Hamas activists said that the armed squads would continue their activities, however, a temporary cease fire, in order to permit the politicians to operate, could become possible under certain conditions, but only with the agreement of Shaykh Ahmad Yasin, the leader of Hamas. [passage omitted]

Dr. Mahmud al-Zahhar is today regarded as the leader of Hamas in the Gaza Strip. After spending a whole year at the deportees' camp in south Lebanon he chooses his words carefully and attempts to project an air of moderation.

[Begin recording, in English] [Al-Zahhar] Hamas is an Islamic organization. It does not believe in violence for violence sake. They believe in fighting to defend themselves and protect their homeland, and to protect the soil of the Palestinian people.

[Unidentified correspondent] Is the Hamas opposed to the peace process now?

[Al-Zahhar] Hamas, as I know, supports peace, but this type of peace process will bring nothing for the Palestinian people. [end recording] [passage omitted]

Al-Rantisi, 2 Others Get 6 Months Detention

TA20121441993 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1300 GMT 20 Dec 93

[Text] Three leading Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] deportees will be kept under administrative detention for six months. This was reported by our correspondent Moti Amir. The three are Hamas spokesman 'Abd-al-'Aziz 'Ali al-Rantisi, 'Abd-'allah Fattah Dukan, and Muhammad Mahmud Hasan Sham'a.

Hamas Delegation Visits Iran; Ties Viewed

NC2012195093 Beirut AL-NAHAR in Arabic 14 Dec 93 p 13

[Report by Yasin Majid from Tehran]

[Text] An Islamic Resistance Movement "Hamas" delegation has ended a week-long visit to the Iranian capital. The delegation was led by Political Bureau Chairman Dr. Musa Abu-Marzuq and also included the movement's official spokesman, Engineer Ibrahim Ghawshah, and Political Bureau member 'Imad al-'Alami. This is Hamas' third visit to Iran. The first was in late 1991 to participate in the international conference in support of the Palestinian intifadah sponsored by the Iranian parliament. The second visit, which took place late 1992, contributed to formulating the initial ties between Iran and Hamas.

The latest visit is believed to have been very successful in transforming the relations between the two sides to a new phase of cooperation at various levels. In other words, the visit, according to an informed source, helped a great deal in establishing ties of confidence and building bridges of understanding that did not exist to this extent before.

The delegation's visit was full of official meetings at the highest levels. A meeting was held with the guide of the Islamic Republic, 'Ali Khamene'i, President Hashemi-Rafsanjani, Majlis Speaker Nateq-Nuri, Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati, and Interior Minister 'Ali Besharati, who was previously deputy foreign minister, in addition to meetings with political figures and parliamentarians. The delegation also held working meetings with Foreign Ministry officials. Although diverse, the talks generally dealt with main issues concerning, first, supporting the Palestinian people's intifadah in the West Bank and Gaza Strip; second, providing assistance to the Palestinian factions opposed to the Gaza-Jericho accord, especially Hamas and the Islamic Jihad Movement; and third, expanding the regional rejection of the Gaza- Jericho accord with a view to breaking the accord.

The Hamas delegation's talks with the Islamic Republic's guide dealt with the need to continue the Palestinian jihad as a religious duty. Hamas' official spokesman described the meeting with Khamene'i as principled and articulate, while Musa Abu-Marzuq said it was warm.

President Hashemi-Rafsanjani, who was eager to receive the delegation in his private office, referred to the pressure placed on Iran by world and regional parties because of its rejection of the Gaza-Jericho accord. But Hashemi-Rafsanjani, who—as Ibrahim Ghawshah affirmed to me—selected his words carefully, stressed Iran's continued rejection of the accord under any circumstances. Iran, he said, knows too well that the accord represents an international political option and that anyone who opposes it places himself in confrontation with the international community.

Delegation member 'Imad al-'Alami said that Hamas realizes the serious international pressure on the Islamic Republic because of its stand on the Gaza-Jericho accord. Despite this pressure, al-'Alami believes that Iran is able to work toward expanding the regional rejection of this accord. He believes that Iran's great relations with Syria may be a suitable step in this direction, especially because Syria still insists on a number of no's, which so far has blocked an agreement on a declaration of principles between Damascus and Tel Aviv.

In view of Iran's important regional standing, the Gulf Cooperation Council states might be greatly affected by Iran's rejection of the accord, despite all the indications on the surface that the Gulf countries are inclined toward normalizing their relations with Israel.

The Qatari foreign minister recently visited the Iranian capital after reports about an Israeli-Qatari agreement on laying a gas pipe from Qatar to Israel. In addition to mediating between Tehran and Abu Dhabi over the three [disputed] islands, the Qatari minister's task was to dispel clouds in Qatari-Iranian relations over the pipe.

In addition, Hamas wants Iran to exercise its role in hardening Sudan's opposition to the Gaza-Jericho accord because no official stands against the accord have been announced by the Sudanese Government at the desired level. The Sudanese Government, which is suffering from unusual economic and security difficulties, seems unwilling to incur political problems, especially after the United States placed Sudan on the list of countries that sponsor terrorism.

An Iranian source said an extensive discussion took place between Iranian officials and the Hamas delegation to consolidate the opposition to the Gaza-Jericho accord, at least by the Palestinian side, especially because the 10 Palestinian factions have not been able to launch a political initiative to effectively pressure the PLO leadership.

The same source said that, after receiving a detailed briefing by the Hamas delegation on the accord and the possibility of exercising pressure on the PLO leadership, the Iranians became more assured of the chances of escalating their opposition to the accord.

In other words, there are numerous (?indications) that the Iranian stand may shift from rejecting the accord to exerting efforts to enlarge the rejectionists' circle in the region.

Iran, which feels the seriousness of the normalization measures—although such measures take place amid a media uproar and face many obstacles, knows very well that opposing the Gaza-Jericho accord provides two basic elements for it:

First, it allows Iran's role at the Islamic level to grow. This is an issue of great interest to the Iranian officials, especially in light of the resurgence of the Islamic awakening in the Islamic world; and

Second, the Iranians' sense a serious danger to their national security because of the Arab-Israeli peace process. This is because Israel, after it normalizes its relations with Arab countries and especially with the Gulf Cooperation Council states, will be a negative factor that affects Iran's political, security, and economic ties with the Gulf countries.

If the Camp David accord has been an obstacle to the resumption of Iranian-Egyptian relations, the outcome of the Arab-Israeli peace talks will, one way or another, have a negative impact on Iranian-Arab relations in general.

Opposition Said Playing Into Israel's Hand

JN1812212793 Baghdad Voice of the PLO in Arabic 1700 GMT 18 Dec 93

[Commentary by the political editor]

[Text] Perhaps what most weakens the position of the Palestinian negotiator is the attitude of the Palestinian opposition. This is simply because, so far, the stand of the opposition seems unserious and not based on a clear political vision and a specific national action program. What is even more serious than all this is that the bulk of this stand has non-Palestinian roots. It is necessary to remind the other side of this equation: If the stand of the Palestinian opposition weakens the position of the Palestinian negotiator, then it follows that this position serves and strengthens the position of the Israeli negotiator, who will realize that the stand of the Palestinian opposition does not serve Palestinian ends or the PLO and its national program.

Nobody should take this issue lightly or believe that we are exaggerating. We are not holding the opposition responsible for things that it is not effectively doing. Nobody should believe that we are against the Palestinian opposition taking a stand. We are only criticizing this stand, especially because it is counterproductive and absurd. If this stand remains the same, we believe, it will lead to an escalation of the Israeli negotiator's attempts to impose his interpretation of the Declaration of Principles and to implement it in accordance with this interpretation.

Quite simply, this means we really need an effective national opposition with specific and clear action programs. Through such programs, it should either topple the agreement and open new horizons for the national Palestinian struggle toward the achievement of our people's objectives and aspirations, or it should work to support the Palestinian reading of the agreement, which demands an independent Palestinian state with holy Jerusalem as its capital. We do not believe any Palestinian force or honest national faction is against the attainment of this objective and aspiration, for the sake of which we have struggled and continue to struggle, and for the sake of which our people have offered and continue to offer the dearest sacrifices, headed by martyrdom. Our way has been illuminated by thousands of righteous martyrs.

But if the current state of affairs remains as it is—opposition statements, eye-catching revolutionary slogans, and inexplicable ideological speeches—then the Israeli margin of maneuver will become wider and the Israeli negotiator will have more room for movement. All this is at the expense of the Palestinian negotiator, his cards, and his national reading of the Declaration of Principles. All will be at the expense of our oppressed people, who are looking forward to the day when the occupation leaves their territory for good. Then, they can enjoy freedom and independence. Will there be a reconsideration of stands before it is too late?

Reformists Welcome 'Arafat Dialogue Invitation

JN2112104993 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 21 Dec 93 pp 1,3

[By JORDAN TIMES staff reporters Sana' 'Atiyah and Nirmin Murad]

[Text] Amman—Palestinian personalities demanding reform in the policy and decision-making process of the Palestine Liberation Organisation's (PLO) leadership Monday [20 December] welcomed Chairman Yasir 'Arafat's readiness to respond to their demands made in a petition signed by 116 prominent personalities.

The petition, signed by three PLO factions and independents from the Palestine National Council (PNC), demanded that the PLO leadership take a more democratic approach, particularly in its handling of the negotiations with Israel in implementing the Oslo accord.

Forty-five of the signatories, who met Monday at the PNC headquarters in Amman, welcomed Mr. 'Arafat's invitation to start a dialogue with the petitioners as "positive."

Palestinian sources said that Palestinian Ambassador to Jordan al-Tayyib 'Abd-al-Rahim Sunday delivered a message from Mr. 'Arafat to the petitioners, or "reformers," that he was ready to meet a delegation representing them in Tunis to discuss their demands.

"It seems the leadership has finally started to take us seriously," a petitioner told the Jordan Times. "His invitation to discuss these demands is indicative of his readiness to put matters on the right track."

Analysts said that the nature of the personalities who signed the petitition and the PLO's "difficult" situation in its negotiations with Israel on the implementation of the Oslo accord were major factors that contributed to Mr. 'Arafat's initial positive response to the petition.

The signatories include leaders from the occupied territories and from the diaspora, members of Mr. 'Arafat's mainstream Fatah movement, members of Yasir 'Abd-Rabbuh's Democratic Front (FIDA), and members of the Palestine People's Party (PPP), in addition to independent PNC members and peace negotiators such as Dr. Haydar 'Abd-al-Shafi.

Mr. 'Arafat had previously ignored calls for reform in the decision-making policies by leaders who were critical of his single-handed leadership.

The petitioners also elected a permanent follow-up committee during Monday's meeting, consisting of nine personalities, "which ensures the seriousness of the process," according to Taysir 'Aruri, a member of the elected committee.

"The formation of this permanent committee is a clear message that this process will not end with the meeting with Mr. 'Arafat in Tunis," Mr. 'Aruri, a member of the PPP, told the JORDAN TIMES.

Mr. 'Arafat invited up to seven representatives from the petitioners, who will be chosen from all the factions and from the occupied territories and the diaspora, Mr. 'Aruri added.

The petition, which was circulated in Jordan and the Israeli-occupied territories and sent to Mr. 'Arafat on Nov. 16, was seen by analysts as the beginning of a reformist movement which may have enough impact to enforce change.

The first news of the petition, in mid-November, indicated that the signatories would commit themselves to demanding immediate reforms and setting up specialised political and legal committees to chart out negotiating strategies and lead the transition to Palestinian autonomy.

The signatories to the petition included well-known Palestinian personlaities who until recently were considered to be against the current Middle East negotiations such as veteran Palestine Central Committee member Ibrahim Abu-'Ayyash.

The text of the petition indicated support for the continuation of the negotiations saying that the Palestinian particpaton had received "constitutional endorsement" through the PLO's Executive Committee and Central Committee.

The signatories also endorsed the signing of the Palestinian-Israeli agreement in Washington in September. "We, the signatories of this agreement, saw the Palestinian-Israeli agreement as a decisive political happening which would be dealt with responsibly and positively. (We aim to) develop the positive elements in it and containing the negative."

"Therefore," the petition continued, "we first announe our complete commitment to join our people in building our new entity."

"Second, we announce our commitment to the Palestine Liberation Organisation and its legitimate institutions as the sole representative of the Palestinian people and national umbrella that cannot be replaced or paralleled in organising the national energy and lead it towards fulfilling the legitimate national aspirations of the Palestinian people."

"We are not satisfied with the working method of political leadership at this stage, not on the level of running the difficult and sensitive negotiations with the Israeli side nor on the level of preparing for phase of national development in the transition stage," the list of demands by the signatories began.

"What has become apparent to all is that the political leadership is conducting its role in an ad hoc way and is not preparing for the steps needed to crystallise the national interest with well-studied planning and executive.

"Second ... [number as received] the political leadership has not exerted enough effort to mobilise a much needed national dialogue whether with national forces which have adopted the agreement as an opportunity which provides for serious possibilities to move forward towards our national goals, or with the principled opposition to the agreement.

"Our national traditions impress on us the need to open this dialogue and work dilligently to make it succeed to build an acceptable limit of national unity which would secure internal Palestinian security and creates a healthy atmosphere which would build support for the new tasks of the Palestinian people.

"Third ... the political leadership was not successful in presenting the agreement to the Palestinian people in an objective manner so that this people can understand the horizons and possibilities for immediate and future movement (within the agreement's stipulations). This has increased ambiguity, confusion and apprehension, especially as the Palestinian people are receiving contradictory and differing views.

"Fourth ... the majority of those who supported the agreement principles during the Central Committee's meeting, actually made their support contingent on the improvement of the leadership's performance, consolidating the Palestinian abilities and utilising Palestinian expertise..."

PLO Reform Follow-Up Committee Members Named

JN2112113193 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 21 Dec 93 pp 32, 24

[Text] Palestinian figures who have signed the political memorandum, gathered at the premises of the Palestine National Council yesterday evening to consider the

formation of a permanent followup committee and the composition of the delegation to meet with 'Arafat in Tunis soon.

The Palestinian figures reviewed Palestinian affairs and explored ways to develop public Palestinian action so as to advance the supreme national interests of the Palestinian people and their just cause. They welcomed the positive response—communicated by al-Tayyib 'Abd-al-Rahim, Palestine's ambassador to Jordan—from the Palestinian president and PLO Executive Committee members stating their availability for dialogue with the memorandum's signatories about democratic reform in the PLO.

The Palestinian personalities then named the following as members of a standing followup committee: Dr. Taysir 'Aruri, Nabil 'Amr, Ghazi al-Khalili, Tawfiq Abu-Bakr, Engineer Ibrahim Abu-'Ayyash, Dr. Anis Qasim, 'Ubaydah al-Kazimi, Mahmud al-Rimawi, and 'Izz-al-Din al-Manasrah.

The followup committee has been asked to coordinate with the memorandum's signatories in the occupied territory and form a seven-member delegation to visit Tunis shortly.

It is to be recalled that a similar meeting will be held in Jerusalem to choose a followup committee in the occupied land and then to name members to the delegation due to visit Tunis.

Germany Raises Palestinian Diplomatic Level

LD1812182493 Algiers Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1702 GMT 18 Dec 93

[Text] The German Government has agreed to raise the level of Palestinian diplomatic representation to general legation, and for the Palestinian flag to be raised over the legation building and the names of the brothers working there to be added to the list of diplomats accredited to Bonn.

This was stated in a letter received from the German state secretary for foreign affairs on 16 December by brother 'Abdallah al-Ifranji, member of the Fatah Central Committee and the PLO's representative in Bonn. The German decision is in line with the promise made by the German Foreign Minister Kinkel at his talks with brother President Abu-'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat] during his successful visit to Bonn.

OPEC Affairs

OPEC Said Unlikely To Rescue Falling Prices

NC1912131893 Paris AFP in English 1225 GMT 19 Dec 93

[By Nadim Kawash]

[Text] Abu Dhabi, Dec 19 (AFP)—OPEC is not likely to hold emergency talks to rescue plunging oil prices and will await the outcome of Oman's contacts with other producers, Gulf oil sources said on Sunday [19 December].

Although prices have remained below 14 dollars, there was no signal from Saudi Arabia or other major producers in the Gulf that they would take any immediate action to lift prices from their lowest level in five years.

"I do not think Gulf states are in favour of an emergency meeting because they apparently want to give OPEC's recent output agreement time to work," said one Gulf oil source, close to the 12-nation cartel.

"An emergency meeting means OPEC will trim production. But it has made clear it will no longer play the residual producer. I believe it prefers to wait and see the results of Oman's consultations with other producers."

Omani Oil Minister Sa'id Bin-Ahmad al-Shanfari is due to tour several members of the so-called Independent Petroleum Exporting Countries (IPEC) to urge them to reduce output to support OPEC's bid in boosting prices.

The Sultanate, which has acted as a link between OPEC and IPEC, took the lead last week by announcing it would cut five to 10 percent from its oil production of 800,000 barrels per day (bpd) in January.

An Omani oil ministry official, contacted by telephone on Sunday, said al-Shanfari had not yet prepared the programme of his trip.

OPEC has blamed independent producers, mainly Britain and Norway, for the price fall and decided to maintain its output ceiling at 24.52 million bpd for the period between October and March. According to Kuwaiti Oil Minister 'Ali al-Baghli, production from the North Sea had risen by more than 700,000 bpd.

Gulf Arab leaders will discuss the oil market when they hold their annual summit talks in Riyadh on Monday. But oil sources ruled out any immediate action on production.

Gulf states suffer heavily from weak oil prices as crude exports account for the bulk of their earnings. Their budgets have been reeling under deficits and some of them have been forced to resort to borrowing.

However, they seem determined to defend their market share despite the drop in prices, in a departure from previous policy.

In the past Gulf producers cut production when prices fell due to high output by other producers, or raised output to keep prices at moderate levels to spur demand.

Such a policy was adopted after 1986, when oil prices tumbled to below 10 dollars due to a production war, pushing OPEC's revenues to a record low of 75 billion dollars, from a peak of 280 billion dollars in 1980.

In an article published in the United Arab Emirates daily AL-KHALIJ on Sunday, Gulf oil analyst Hasan Fakhru said he believed OPEC should return to the role of "swing producer."

"OPEC should return to the policy of high prices at the expense of production, because the current policy is pushing it into a deep abyss, as was the case in 1986," Fakhru said.

Algeria

HSC Affirms Commitment to Talks, Seeks Consensus

LD2012205793 Algiers ENTV Television Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 20 Dec 93

[Text] Following the meeting of the Higher Security Council, which decided to extend the mandate of the Higher State Council [HSC] until and not later than 31 January 1994, the HSC met on 19 December 1993 under the chairmanship of Mr. Ali Kafi.

On this occasion, the HSC affirmed its determination to provide every opportunity to the current dialogue and the most favorable conditions for the convening of the national conference; it has also affirmed its full readiness to reach a wide consensus within the framework of the objectives given to the National Dialogue Commission.

The HSC proposed that its dialogue, which has been under way since September 1992 with political parties, associations, and political personalities, should include all Algerians who care for the country's interests and who are committed to the ideals of 1 November 1954, to the Constitution of 1989, and to democracy and its principles.

It should remain clear to everyone, however, that such a dialogue cannot be extended to those who have been involved in terrorism, have supported it, or have called for it. And in view of the assassinations and acts of sabotage which have been carried out by these groups—they claim to be defendants of Islamic values, but they are in fact behaving like the real enemy of the Algerian people—the HSC calls upon all the country's national forces to mobilize in order to thwart this plot, which aims at undermining the state's stability and dealing a blow to the principles of republicanism.

Hence, given the difficult circumstances facing Algeria, it is imperative that the parties that have adopted dialogue surmount all partisan interests and behave in a realistic and constructive manner in order to allow the country to overcome the crisis and bring about stability and progress in a bid to revive the national economy for the sake of progress.

On the other hand, the HSC cannot accept the fact that, contrary to agreed upon international norms, a number of countries are willing to allow their territories to be used as bases for terrorist networks and propaganda campaigns. Here the HSC would like to recall that in its fight against terrorism, Algeria has in fact been working to protect stability in the Arab Maghreb, the western Mediterranean, and in the sub-Saharan and Sahel African countries.

Dialogue Commission: Conference Date Fixed

LD2012215193 Algiers ENTV Television Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 20 Dec 93

[Text] According to a report by the Algerian Press Service [APS] which we have just received, a member of the National Dialogue Commission has stated that the decision to convene the National Conference was made following an agreement with the parties to the dialogue. The same member pointed out, in particular, that the National Dialogue Commission chairman received both Mr. (Bacha), representative of the Rally for Culture and Democracy [RCD], and Mr. Mehri, representative of the National Liberation Front [FLN].

Mr. (Bacha) was received on 14 December at 1000 hours and Mr. Mehri on 15 December at 1400 hours, he added.

The National Dialogue Commission member asserted that both men agreed to convene the national conference during the last week of January 1994.

The National Dialogue Commission was therefore astonished by statements made by a number of parties, he added. He said such statements aimed at undermining the credibility of its members' whole work. He hoped he has been able to clarify the general atmosphere which prevailed over the National Dialogue Commission's contacts.

FLN, RDC Release Statements on Conference

LD2012211893 Algiers ENTV Television Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 20 Dec 93

[Text] Following yesterday's Higher Security Council announcement of the date for the national conference and the extension of the mandate of the Higher State Council, the National Liberation Front [FLN] Political Bureau has issued a statement claiming that it was not consulted directly or indirectly on the date of the national conference, and that it had no clear idea about the agenda or content of such a conference, or on those who would be invited to participate.

The Rally for Democracy and Culture [RDC], for its part, questioned the aims behind the of extension of the mandate of the Higher State Council, saying that its stance on the national conference will be taken once it is sure of the content and agenda of the conference.

Haroun on Domestic Situation, Cooperation

AU2112104593 Budapest NEPSZABADSAG in Hungarian 20 Dec 93 p 11

[Interview with 'Ali Haroun, member of the Collective Presidency of Algeria, by Attila Seres; place and date not given: "The Government in Algeria Cannot Coexist With Terrorism"]

[Excerpts] [passage omitted] [Seres] The chairman of the five-member Collective Presidency announced recently that the mandate of the Higher State Council was over and the body would resign at the end of December. What comes next? Who will lead the country: a president, another collective body, or perhaps the Army?

[Haroun] First of all, I would like to make it clear that we are not talking about a resignation here. When former President Chedli Benjedid resigned on 11 January 1992, the Supreme

Committee appointed a five-member presidential committee to fulfill the presidential tasks until the end of the mandate on 31 December 1993. This limited mandate is now over, and thus is in no need of resignation. However, the question is warranted: Who will lead the country?

Under normal circumstances, it would have been the task of the Higher State Council to organize parliamentary elections, but this was impossible in the current situation and amidst the increase in terrorist actions. We exchanged views with the political parties in the framework of national consultations, with the exception of the Islamic Party—FIS—that was responsible for the terrorist actions and has been dissolved in the meantime. Apart from one or two parties, all the parties agreed to postpone the elections. The question is what to do in the interim period. A consensus is emerging from several proposals, namely that a three-member collective body should take over the task of president. This body would be made up of a chairman and two deputy chairmen. Most probably, only the current prime minister would be a member of the new body.

[Seres] Who will fill the other two positions?

[Haroun] The national dialogue with the parties should decide this on the basis of a consensus. [passage omitted]

[Seres] What will the role of the Army be in the upcoming interim period?

[Haroun] The representative of the Army is there in the current presidential body.

[Seres] Will he also be present in the new three-member body?

[Haroun] Not necessarily the same person, and the Army itself will have to decide on this, but someone will definitely be present.

[Seres] The socialist model that Algeria came to know in the form of a one-party dictatorship has obviously collapsed. However, many people say that it is impossible to introduce a Western-type bourgeois democracy in today's Algeria, and an Islamic republic would probably be a new dictatorship in religious disguise. What is the next model for Algeria?

[Haroun] I think that Algeria was a little too hasty in shifting to a pluralistic democracy. The people revolted in 1988 after 28 years of one-party rule and centralized economy and said enough of one-party dictatorship. However, we went to another extreme: Some 62 new parties emerged within one year. I am sure that this type of pluralist democracy is not suitable for Algeria. In addition, it is a well-known fact that democracy cannot be introduced via an order. This is a matter of culture and education. The Algerian people were not prepared for this pluralist democracy. So, the future lies in a republic, of course not an Islamic one, but a people's republic; simply a democratic republic with a pluralist system of institutions, the right of free expression of opinion, and the recognition of individual human rights. [passage omitted]

[Seres] Why did you turn against the foreigners?

[Haroun] A few months ago, the FIS spokesman who lives abroad called upon various countries to sever ties with Algeria. This ultimatum was mainly addressed to countries that are our major economic partners, such as France, Spain, Germany, and the United States. Given the fact that they could not achieve this, they turned against foreign citizens and are trying to force these countries to evacuate their citizens from Algeria.

[Seres] Hungarian-Algerian relations were based on agreements of the two state parties in the past decades, and these relations must now be reformulated after the changes in both countries. On which principles can these relations now be based?

[Haroun] Our countries are bound together by decades-old ties, and we do not forget that the Hungarians supported us in the Algerian war of independence. This sympathy appeared both in diplomacy and specific economic aid. Our political relations continued at the former level after the changes in the regimes, but the intensity of our economic cooperation has slowed down due to many reasons. Among these reasons, I must primarily mention historical ones: For traditional and geographical reasons, Algeria has close economic relations with the Mediterranean states primarily, but this does not mean that we cannot improve our bilateral economic cooperation. As is well known, Algeria is an exporter of mineral oil. A natural gas pipeline goes from here through Tunisia and Italy up to the former Yugoslavia. This pipeline is currently under repair, and its current capacity can be doubled within two or three years. We have plans to provide natural gas to the Central European countries, including Hungary and thus, to raise the level of our economic cooperation to the level of our excellent political relations.

'Fundamentalist Gunmen' Shoot Deputy Mayor

NC2012124793 Paris AFP in English 1206 GMT 20 Dec 93

[Text] Algiers, Dec 20 (AFP)—Two suspected Islamic fundamentalist gunmen shot dead a deputy mayor in an Algiers suburb in the latest such attack on appointed council officials, the independent AL-WATAN daily reported Monday.

The killers shot Lakhdar Baali, deputy mayor of Gue-de-Constantine, three times in the face at point-blank range outside his home on Saturday, the newspaper reported.

Several members of local authorities appointed to replace elected councils dominated by Muslim fundamentalists have been assassinated, while most others have received death threats.

Islamic extremists fighting the government have condemned the officials for replacing Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) councillors when the local authorities were dissolved in April and May 1992.

The army intervened in January 1992 to bring about the cancellation of general elections the FIS was poised to win, after the movement had already swept the board in local polls.

Two Locomotives Derailed by Sabotage 19 Dec

LD2112104393 Algiers ENTV Television Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 20 Dec 93

[Text] The security services reported today that a sabotage act has derailed two locomotives and seven railway wagons carrying fuel and grains to Saida [250 miles west of Algiers]. The sabotage was carried out yesterday on the railway at Sidi Boubakeur. The same source added that the train's mechanic and conductor were injured.

Prime Minister Cited on Relations With Morocco

LD2012154093 Rabat MAP in English 1223 GMT 20 Dec 93

[Text] Algiers, Dec. 20 (MAP)—'We want our relations with Morocco to be as good as possible, because we have important joint borders', Algerian Premier Redha Malek said over the weekend.

At a meeting with foreign media accredited to Algiers, Malek said 'Algeria and Morocco should develop and consolidate bilateral relations no matter what differences they have'.

The Algerian premier underlined the need 'to definitively draw the borders with Morocco and to implement the existing convention on borders', Malek said, adding that relations between the European Community and the Maghreb should be boosted.

'For Algeria, the Maghreb is a reality rather than a motto', Malek said, noting that 'the construction of the Maghreb depends on the level of inter-Maghreban relations'.

Illustrating the importance of the Maghreb for Algeria, the Algerian premier mentioned the example of the gas pipeline conveying Algerian gas to Italy via Tunisia and the pipe to convey gas to Spain via Morocco.

Maghreban countries should further enhance economic cooperation, he added stressing that the situation in Algeria should be stabilized so that inter-Maghreban exchanges will be intensified.

Malek voiced readiness to consolidate relations with Morocco and affirmed that the two countries envision the setting up of a joint commission.

On the drawing of Algerian-Tunisian borders, Malek said the two countries managed to settle their border dispute which dates back to the colonization era.

Final Demarcation of Tunisian Border Concluded

LD1812183193 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1800 GMT 18 Dec 93

[Text] The final demarcation of the Algerian-Tunisian border was concluded today in Tabarka [Tunisia].

Foreign Minister Mohamed Salah Dembri described the process as a model for building the Maghreban edifice.

Egypt

Musa Comments on Palestinian-Israeli Talks

NC2012155593 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1405 GMT 20 Dec 93

[Text] Cairo, 20 Dec (MENA)—Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa has asserted the need to comply with the text of the Palestinian-Israeli Declaration of Principles signed in Washington on 13 September.

In remarks he made today, Musa underlined the need for an Israeli withdrawal in accordance with the declaration and for the establishment of a Palestinian national authority. Musa noted that Israel must take into consideration the fact that any step must serve the ultimate goal of establishing Palestinian self-rule in the West Bank and Gaza. In this respect, the foreign minister emphasized that the issue of self-rule in the West Bank and Gaza must be viewed as a "step" toward the final negotiations and toward determining the final status of these territories. He added: We are still in the first stage on a long road.

Musa referred to the obstacles obstructing the implementation of the Palestinian-Israeli negotiations. He noted that the difference lies in the gap between the Palestinians' great expectations and the Israelis' major reservations. Bridging this gap, he added, requires more negotiations, noting that the agreement itself does not lead to the establishment of a Palestinian state. However, he stressed at the same time that Egypt hopes that the Gaza-Jericho Agreement will lead to a full self-rule, self-determination for the Palestinian people, and coexistence between the Israelis and Palestinians.

Musa denied any Egyptian-PLO differences of views regarding the Palestinian-Israeli disagreement over control of the crossing points in Gaza and Jericho. He stressed in this regard that Egypt has no control over the Palestinians, adding that the PLO is the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. He noted that Egypt's main interest lies in the need to achieve a just peace in the Middle East, adding that there is agreement among most of the parties concerned on the importance of reaching a solution.

Musa said that despite the postponement of the signing of the Palestinian-Israeli agreement on implementing the declaration of principles agreement signed between the two parties, the agreement "has not failed." He said that there is a need for relaxation in the occupied land through the release of the Palestinian detainees and loosening the

Israeli grip, not only in the areas where Israel is to withdraw but throughout the occupied territories. He ruled out the possibility of a civil war in the Palestinian areas between the opponents and supporters of the Palestinian agreement with Israel. He noted that the initial statements by the Hamas Movement and other opposition groups state that although they oppose the agreement they will not use arms to oppose it. He said in this respect that opposition is a "healthy phenomenon."

On the most important events of 1993, Musa said that this year saw the launching of the peace process in the Middle East: The Palestinian-Israeli agreement was signed and a Jordanian-Palestinian agreement was reached. In addition, there is great momentum for advancing on the Syrian and Lebanese tracks. He stressed that the peace process has been put on the right track, noting that all opportunites must be seized to make the peace process successful according to the principle of land for peace

Discussing events in Africa, Musa said that the OAU's performance had improved under Egypt's current chairmanship in dealing with numerous disputes in Africa.

Discussing world affairs, Musa said that this year has seen events that will affect Egypt, such as the GATT agreement on international trade and developments in Europe and the Mediterranean. He noted that the reaching of the GATT agreement after the settlement of differences with the United States is one of the most important recent events in the world. He noted, however, that this agreement serves the advanced countries more than the developing nations, adding that many developing countries, particularly in Africa, will suffer great losses as a result of the GATT agreement.

Musa voiced his hope that before consultations in Morocco in April prior the final signing of the GATT agreement, the rich nations will give the developing nations some special considerations, particularly in the areas of agriculture and raw materials. He said that if the rich nations fail to offer privileges to the developing nations Africa will lose about 50 percent of its preferential trade transactions. He noted that certain commodities that Egypt produces and exports will be affected, such as cotton. [passage indistinct]

Musa stressed that a good atmosphere must be crated so that Egypt can begin a dialogue with Iran to improve bilateral ties. He voiced his hope that the Iranian policy will eschew matters that have caused tension in our relations.

Discussing the situation in Yemen, Musa expressed hope that the Yemeni officials will be able to find a peaceful solution to the political crisis, noting that Egypt is in contact with the Yemeni brothers and is listening to the views of all sides.

Referring to the issue of terrorism, Musa stressed that intimidating Egyptian society is unacceptable to everyone. He noted that the terrorist operations have not reached the point of challenging the basic foundations of Egyptian society.

Regarding the German initiative on nuclear disarmament, Musa noted that it is positive. He stressed that Egypt welcomes the German approach to disarmament. He said that good cooperation is possible under the German proposals, which serve peace in the region and the world.

Discusses 'Arafat-Rabin Talks

NC1812151593 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1455 GMT 18 Dec 93

[Text] Cairo, 18 Dec (MENA)—Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa has stated that the date of the meeting between Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat and Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin will be set in light of the ongoing contacts, indicating that Egypt will host this meeting.

On the escalation of the statements by the Palestinian and Israeli sides, Musa said it is not beneficial for either side to escalate their statements. There is a need for calm at this stage and for emphasis on work to reach a just and fair formula compatible with what has already been agreed upon.

Musa said his meeting with the Palestinian delegation yesterday was for the purpose of consultation and to study the outstanding issues between the Palestinian and Israeli sides.

Interviewed on Peace Process

AU2012143293 Vienna DIE PRESSE in German 20 Dec 93 p 3

[Interview with Foreign Minister 'Amr Muhammud Musa by Peter Gerner; place and date not given: "The Schedule Is Not Sacred, but the Peace Process Is"]

[Text] [Gerner] The Israeli-Palestinian Peace Agreement contains a detailed schedule for Israel's withdrawal from Jericho and Gaza and transferring the administration to the PLO. How do you assess Israeli Prime Minister Rabin's comment that this schedule is "not sacred?"

[Musa] The schedule is not sacred, but the peace process is. This should be respected by all parties. Anything that harms the credibility of the peace process threatens the future of this region. In order to maintain this credibility, the agreed timetable should be kept. If for some reason a change becomes necessary, this should be as small as possible.

[Gerner] One increasingly gets the impression that Israel just wants to get rid of the problematic Gaza Strip but that it wants to keep the rest of the occupied territories, including the Jericho district, under its control. What is Egypt's position in this matter?

[Musa] Israel has committed itself to withdrawing from the Jericho region, and Israel must fulfill this commitment. The withdrawal from Gaza and Jericho is a first

step on the path to full autonomy for the entire occupied territories, and toward a final settlement of the Palestine problem. This means that Jericho is just as important as Gaza. That is what the agreement says. And we insist on the agreement being kept in this respect.

[Gerner] How strong and efficient, do you think, are the Palestinian opponents of the agreement?

[Musa] I would say there are three elements in this context:

1. Since there have been no tangible results so far, the agreement continues to meet with strong criticism. But once the Palestinians see that the situation is changing, that the Israelis are actually withdrawing, and that Palestinian self-rule is taking over, then this opposition will die down.

2. We expect an economic upswing once the agreement has been fulfilled.

3. The third element is mainly a psychological one. By evacuating Gaza and Jericho, Israel will for the first time since 1967 withdraw from Palestinian territories.

[Gerner] How do you see Syria's attitude in this connection?

[Musa] Syria thinks that progress can only be achieved jointly. Each component of a problem, however, has special features that cannot be treated alike. There is undoubtedly some interdependence. But Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad has repeatedly said that he does not agree with the Palestinians (of the 'Arafat group, editor's comment), but that he does not want to put up any active opposition to them, either.

[Gerner] Back in spring, Damascus did not seem to object to things going better on the Israeli-Syrian track than they did on the other one. Why are they annoyed now?

[Musa] That is normal. In Syria's view, the overriding common interests should not be disregarded, even if there are different speeds involved in the process.

[Gerner] Were you surprised at the announcement of a planned summit in January between President Clinton and Hafiz al-Asad?

[Musa] Not at all. Egypt's President Mubarak called for such a meeting on several occasions.

[Gerner] Would a failure of this summit not be a setback for the Middle East peace process?

[Musa] You cannot exclude risks. But everything indicates that progress can be achieved. In a joint draft declaration of principles, Syria and Israel agreed on several points. But everything is still stuck on one point: full normalization of bilateral relations between Israel and Syria in return for complete Israeli withdrawal from Golan. This was repeatedly offered by President al-Asad. At the current stage it is not necessary to negotiate everything in detail. A basic declaration showing Israel's willingness would be sufficient. Thus, there is plenty of room for maneuver.

[Gerner] Is the Syrian leadership aware of the fact that Rabin is forced to act cautiously in view of a critical Israeli public?

[Musa] There is no doubt about that. But the Israelis themselves do not seem to be aware of the fact that President al-Asad, too, must take account of the mood in his country. Thinking that the Syrian public can simply be ignored, would be a fundamental mistake. We know that the majority of Israelis want peace. The same goes for the Syrians.

[Gerner] What advice has Egypt given to Libya with regard to the Lockerbie affair?

[Musa] A lot. But all advice aimed at the fact that guilty suspects should be put on trial. At the same time, we cannot expect the sovereign state of Libya to extradite its citizens to another country. Libyans have dignity, too. They are not all terrorists and, therefore, cannot be sentenced collectively.

[Gerner] On Iraq: Does maintaining the embargo not increasingly turn into a kind of harassment, a collective punishment?

[Musa] As an Arab country, Iraq cannot be torn from our midst. We are very concerned about maintaining the territorial unity of Iraq. It must not be divided. It must be led back to the Arab community. Many Arab governments do not want to live with Saddam Husayn. But it is not within our power to decide who the Iraqis want to have as their head of government.

Mideast States Urged To Get Rid of Nuclear Arms

NC1812143393 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1240 GMT 18 Dec 93

[Commentary by Ahmad al-Qasir: "The World Community Unanimously Endorsed Egypt's Call To Free the Middle East of Nuclear Weapons"]

[Excerpts] [passage omitted] The world community showed its appreciation for Egypt's role and continuous efforts to safeguard world peace when the UN General Assembly unanimously backed Egypt's draft resolution to free the Middle East of nuclear weapons. The resolution called on all countries concerned to join the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty and to place their nuclear weapons under the supervision of the International Atomic Energy Agency.

What makes this important step for consolidating world peace in this sensitive part of the world more significant is that the approval of Egypt's proposal to free the Middle East of nuclear weapons was coupled with another resolution, which Egypt voted for, on Israel's nuclear weapons. The resolution called directly on Israel to renounce the possession of nuclear weapons and join the nonproliferation treaty.

Egypt's call, which was backed by the UN General Assembly, was not born accidentally or imposed by certain

circumstances. It stemmed from the Egyptian leadership's firm belief that world peace is indivisible and that it is high time to end the state of armed struggle in the Middle East so that the people may give more attention to economic and social development to create a better tomorrow for future generations. [passage omitted]

The UN General Assembly's resolution calling for freeing the Middle East of nuclear weapons is a practical way to help promote the ongoing peace efforts exerted by the international community. It will prevent those countries that possess nuclear weapons from threatening their neighbors and imposing their will on them. It will also prevent other countries from attempting to obtain these destructive weapons in a bid to ward off the nuclear threat against them. In addition, it will help put the brakes on all types of arms races by the region's countries and eliminate all potential hazards that may result from radiation in the densely populated Middle East region. More importantly, the resolution paves the way for the disputing parties to regain confidence in each other, which would ultimately help them meet half way to achieve a just peace that guarantees the legitimate rights of all the region's countries.

Egypt's call to free the Middle East of nuclear weapons is a new addition to the extensive efforts that President Mubarak has been exerting for years to promote peace between the Arabs and Israel at the international level. At the same time, it affirms Egypt's deep belief in the strategy of peace as the only way for reaching an understanding among the region's countries and highlights the need for all countries in the region not to violate it, regardless of the excuses they use as a facade. Through the United Nations, Egypt has opened the door for all regional countries to prove their goodwill and seriousness in their quest for peace and to get rid of nuclear weapons. When will the regional countries that possess nuclear weapons respond to the world community's peaceful call?

Editorial Backs UN Resolution on Nonproliferation

NC1912090693 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0600 GMT 19 Dec 93

[Text] Cairo, 19 Dec (MENA)—The newspaper AL-AHRAM comments in an editorial today on the UN General Assembly's recent resolution urging all Middle Eastern countries to join the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty and stop developing or producing nuclear bombs.

The paper notes that Egypt was among the first countries to join the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty in the 1960's, while Israel refused and continues to refuse to sign the treaty or commit itself to the nonpossession of nuclear arms.

Referring to the UN inspection committees that have monitored Iraq's airspace and territory since it invaded Kuwait to ensure that it does not possess the capability to manufacture weapons of mass destruction, AL-AHRAM says a similar measure has not been applied to Israel even though it does not allow its nuclear installations to be inspected.

The paper urges Israel to comply with the UN General Assembly resolution, as the other countries in the region have, in line with the current effort toward establishing peace and good-neighborliness among them.

Libya Advised To Stop Anti-West Campaign

NC2112090193 Cairo AL-WAFD in Arabic 18 Dec 93 p 1

[Report by 'Abd-al-Nabi 'Abd-al-Sattar]

[Text] The Egyptian authorities have advised Libya to halt its media campaign and harsh criticism against the West to create the appropriate atmosphere for the Egyptian effort to reach a peaceful solution of the Lockerbie crisis.

Egyptian Foreign Ministry sources said Libya has not officially asked Egypt to stop its mediation efforts.

Libyan Involvement in Kidnapping 'Not Ruled Out'

NC2112113693 Cairo AL-AHRAM in Arabic 18 Dec 93 p 8

["Close-up" column by Salamah Ahmad Salamah: "Who Kidnapped al-Kikhya?"]

[Text] After six days of silence and a lot of speculation, the interior minister announced that Egypt is investigating the disappearance of former Libyan Foreign Minister Mansur al-Kikhya, who mysteriously went missing while attending meetings of the Arab Human Rights Organization in Cairo!

Although Arab and non-Arab press elaborately discuss the circumstances of al-Kikhya's disappearance, seeing strong possibilities that Libyan intelligence may have kidnapped him and smuggled him into Libya, it is premature for anyone to consider this a conclusive fact. But there are many signs to suggest that this is not ruled out. Al-Kikhya is a leading opponent of Colonel al-Qadhdhafi and he leads the opposition "Libyan National Alliance." He lives in Paris and is engaged in public political activity against the Libyan regime, which allows no political opposition in the great Jamahiriyah!

We hope this is not true and that Colonel al-Qadhdhafi's intelligence is not involved in this crime so that Libya might avoid adding another crisis to those besieging the country. Involvement in the Lockerbie bombing has isolated Libya internationally and led to economic and political sanctions against it.

Certainly, Libya does not need to lose more friends or win more enemies. Colonel al-Qadhdhafi was long engaged in serious illegitimate experiments and practices outside his country and he once pursued his political opponents abroad to liquidate them but to no avail. The Libyan regime can never be forgiven if doubts that the Libyan intelligence kidnapped al-Kikhya in Egypt turn out to be true. Egypt has always been eager to protect political refugees on its land whatever the circumstances.

But what causes worry and strengthens doubts about the soundness of recent Libyan acts are reports that Colonel al-Qadhdhafi has invited leaders of radical Palestinian groups, such as terrorist Abu-Nidal [Sabri al-Banna], Ahmad Jibril, and Abu-al-'Abbas [Muhammad 'Abbas] and leaders of the Irish Republican Army, which is launching a terrorist war against Britain, to meet him. He said he supports their causes but does not approve of their terrorist acts!

Previously, the colonel announced that he had abandoned support for those terrorist organizations. But it appears that failure to settle the Lockerbie crisis and the tightening of international sanctions against Libya have strongly frustrated al-Qadhdhafi and pushed him toward these incalculable acts. Regrettably, such practices do not harm the colonel alone but the entire Libyan people. Silencing the opponents does not help.

Al-Kikhya Believed in Libya

PM2112105093 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 19 Dec 93 pp 1, 4

[Report by 'Ali Salih from London and unattributed AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT report from Cairo: "Opposition Confirms AL-Kikhya Taken to Libya After He Was Kidnapped in Cairo"]

[Excerpts] The Egyptian security authorities are questioning all Libyan nationals living in Cairo who had visited Mansur al-Kikhya when he was in Cairo before he disappeared on 10 December. [passage omitted]

The Libyan opposition in Egypt confirmed yesterday that it was convinced that Mansur al-Kikhya was kidnapped by agents of the Libyan regime and that he was now in Libya.

Muhammad Jibril, representative of the National Front for the Salvation of Libya [NFSL] in Cairo, has stated that NFSL members were able to contact the opposition figure's brother, Mahmud al-Kikhya, who lives in Benghazi, the day before yesterday and that he told them that a Libyan official had confirmed to his relatives that he was in Libya but declined to give further details.

Jibril believes that al-Qadhdhafi is "holding al-Kikhya as a hostage to put pressure on the opposition to stop its struggle against the Libyan regime." [passage omitted]

AL-AKHBAR Commentary Criticizes Iraq, Iran

NC1812102093 Cairo AL-AKHBAR in Arabic 13 Dec 93 pp 1, 5

[Commentary by Jalal Duwaydar: "Their Aim is Hegemony and Aggression, Never Their Nations' Interest"]

[Text] It has become the duty of all countries to absorb the international changes and understand that policies in this age are inclined toward establishing peace, consolidating security and stability, and renouncing aggression and Cold War policies.

The efforts by sincere governments and states that take an interest in their national affairs and their future must focus on advancing development in these countries to raise the standard of living and secure a dignified and honest life for all citizens.

To achieve this goal, all countries are required to implement this strategy, which should be a priority.

Adventurism, conspiracies, and inciting tensions do not fall in the context of this strategy because such actions exhaust the nation's strength and resources—unless the aim is to cover up the state's inability to run its affairs or to cover up internal corruption by keeping people preoccupied with issues and battles in which the nation has no interest. The responsibilities of states that respect values and principles also include taking neighborly ties into consideration and working toward consolidating confidence and cooperation to achieve the nations' joint interests.

Certainly, there are some awkward examples of states on all continents and in all parts of the world that continue to live with the backward mentality of the past by fomenting conflicts and falling into the abyss of rejected dreams and wishes with a view toward achieving domination and hegemony. Regrettably, these states engage in such behavior in a world approaching the 21st century to reap the fruits of the wonderful progress accomplished for mankind in all spheres.

Bad circumstances have dictated that Arab and Islamic nations be inflicted with such examples, which place burdens on their religion, nationalism, security, stability, future, and entity.

Strangely, two such examples, Iraq and Iran, fought each other to the death in an aimless war that cost their nations hundreds of thousands of innocent victims and hundreds of millions of dollars that should have been devoted to the development projects that both countries desperately need.

After this deadly conflict, which no one won, Iraq became embroiled in the mad invasion of Arab, Muslim Kuwait only to end up in its current state of loss and suffering, the effects of which have spread to the whole Arab nation.

As for Iran, instead of directing its efforts toward nursing the wounds of its war with Iraq, it chose to follow the same path as Iraq and adopt the same aggressive methods to deal with neighboring and other Arab countries.

From among its neighbors, Iran selected the United Arab Emirates as the country on which to practice its ambitions and aggression by taking the Tunb al-Sughra and Tunb al-Kubra islands. Perhaps what is astonishing is the Iranian officials' visits and conflicting statements, which assert Iran's eagerness to set up good ties with neighboring Gulf states, at the same time the country is practicing threats and extortion. The saying "I like your talk but your deeds astonish me" applies to this behavior.

Tehran announced some days ago that it is awaiting the arrival of a delegation from the United Arab Emirates to resume discussions over the issue of the occupied Arab islands. At the same time, statements by Iranian officials say that this issue is totally closed and that these islands are now part of Iran.

These statements were preceded a few weeks ago by the announcement that Iran has expanded its territorial waters in the Gulf to include the islands within its borders. The UAE responded very courageously to this decision by announcing that it has extended its territorial waters. It has the absolute right to do so to include the islands within its borders and preserve its historic right to its territory.

Iran's policy toward countries that are not its direct neighbors is to proceed along an aggressive plan based on creating problems, squandering Arab and Islamic potential, and mobilizing agents to carry out acts of terrorism, sabotage, and murder.

Iran hoisted the slogan of exporting the Islamic revolution, thus distorting the righteous religion that has been firmly proved not to have anything to do with Iran's stands and behavior, considering its values and principles of tolerance far and wide. Iran allocated millions of dollars to finance terrorist operations and terrorists in Egypt and numerous other Arab and Islamic countries while its own people are in dire need of each dollar to pay for their daily requirements.

All international economic institutions and individuals who have economic dealings with Iran are talking about the state of economic collapse from which it is suffering. Confirmed reports say that the Iranian Treasury is suffering from a lack of revenue and liquidity. They say that all of Iran's foreign contracts and purchases for the sole purpose of providing essentials to its people have been subjected to a delay of six months to a year until the necessary credits become available to pay off the sums.

A state that is facing such economic problems as a result of its stances and policies, which have led to its international isolation, needs to review its policies and work on establishing good relations with other countries to find a way out of its crisis for the sake of its people. Of course, this cannot happen unless sanity and reason return to that tyrannical group and it abandons its aggressive philosophy and ambitions to control and impose hegemony.

Iran's rulers need to wake up and retreat from this dangerous road they have chosen for themselves and from which they will only reap destruction and demolition. They should learn from the bitter experiences other countries that followed the same course.

Egyptian Fishermen Held in Yemen Released

NC1712184093 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1758 GMT 17 Dec 93

[Excerpt] Cairo, 17 Dec (MENA)—Twenty one Egyptian fishermen returned to Cairo today on board an Egyptian plane coming from Sanaa after the Yemeni authorities released them. The Yemeni authorities had been holding the fishermen since October after they caught them fishing in the southern part of the Red Sea. [passage omitted]

Businessmen Reportedly Divert Arms to Croatia

NC1712122693 Cairo AL-SHA'B in Arabic 14 Dec 93 p 9

[Report by 'Abd-al-Sattar Abu-Husayn]

[Text] The Hungarian authorities have opened an investigation of officials of Technica Company who participated with Egyptian businessmen in exporting weapons to the Croats, using official Egyptian documents.

AL-SHA'B has obtained a copy of a document that Egyptian arms merchants used to export weapons to Croatia. The translation of the document is as follows:

We certify that the following weapons that the Al-Dab' Trading Company in Cairo, DAPA TRADE, [last two words in English] has contracted for are for the use of the armed forces in the Arab Republic of Egypt: 40,000 AK-47 rifles; 20 million 7.62-mm rounds; 12,000 AK-74 rifles; 10 million 5.45-mm rounds; 10,000 9-mm pistols; and 5 million 9-mm rounds.

This document issued by the Egyptian Embassy in Budapest was used to buy these weapons from Bulgaria and to transfer them to Croatia via Hungary.

Meanwhile, Tariq al-Dab', accompanied by the chairman of the board of directors of a certain government press establishment, used a government security department to cover up his crime and to prevent an investigation of himself.

AL-SHA'B asks the ministers of defense, foreign affairs, and interior, and the public prosecutor: What have you done to investigate this crime? Why have the Hungarian authorities begun an investigation of their own citizens while the Islamic Egyptian government has done nothing of the sort?

It is worth noting that the Egyptian businessmen who made this deal are laundering their money through Egyptian investment companies.

Denmark Refuses To Hand Over 'Terrorist'

NC2112094493 Cairo AL-WAFD in Arabic 18 Dec 93 p 1

[Report by Muhammad Zaki]

[Text] Security sources have revealed that the Interior Ministry has recently adopted new measures to tighten the noose around fugitive terrorist leaders in some European countries. The sources noted that the measures are based on setting up information coordination with countries that have no eqxtradition treaties with Egypt.

The Interior Ministry's plan aims to supply Western media with adequate information on terrorists living on their territory. The security sources told AL-WAFD that some

Western countries have responded to the ministry's measures. The sources said that Denmark asked the Egyptian security apparatus to supply it with enough information on terrorists Tal'at Fu'ad and Muhammad Qasim, leaders of the Vanguards of Conquest Organization, and their crimes. But the Egyptian authorities were surprised by Denmark's refusal to hand over Tal'at Qasim [name as published] because he has been granted political asylum and because Egypt is a state where death sentences are carried out.

Musa, U.S. Official Discuss Somalia

NC2012070893 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 0500 GMT 20 Dec 93

[Text] Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa last night met James Dobbins, U.S. State Department special coordinator on Somalia, who stated that the United States has started withdrawing its forces from Somalia in line with the announcement it made last October. The U.S. official said his visit to Cairo and talks with 'Amr Musa fall within the framework of Egyptian-U.S. contacts. The visit is also designed to continue the talks that U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher started on Somalia in Cairo recently.

Students Denounce Clinton-Rushdie Meeting

NC2112084293 Cairo AL-USRAH AL-'ARABIYAH in Arabic 16 Dec 93 p 4

[Excerpt] Egypt's students have denounced the recent meeting between U.S. President Bill Clinton and apostate writer Salman Rushdie. Rushdie attacked the Prophet, may God's peace and prayers be upon him, and the messiah.

In a statement, the students said Clinton's welcoming of apostate Rushdie violates religious values and disregards the sentiments of people of religion. [passage omitted]

Cypriot Foreign Minister Arrives for Talks

NC1912120593 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1130 GMT 19 Dec 93

[Text] Cairo, 19 Dec (MENA)—Cypriot Foreign Minister Alekos Mikhailidhis arrived in Cairo today on a three-day official visit to Cairo. Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa met him at the airport.

Mikhailidhis said that he has a message to President Husni Mubarak from Cypriot President Glavkos Kliridhis.

The Cypriot minister said that his talks in Egypt will focus on the peace process, international issues of common concern, and tourism. He added that Cyprus is opposed to the violence in Bosnia and supports the peace process there.

Foreign Minister Musa said that the talks with Mikhailidhis will begin tonight and will deal with developments in the region and the Mediterranean, the Middle East peace process, the Cyprus issue, and bilateral relations.

Musa added that Egypt and Cyprus will sign an agreement aimed to prevent double taxation and promote all aspects of cooperation.

Signs Agreements With Musa

NC1912215493 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 2100 GMT 19 Dec 93

[Text] Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa and Cypriot Foreign Minister Alekos Mikhailidhis this evening signed an agreement to prevent double taxation between the two countries. They signed another agreement to promote bilateral cultural, scientific, and technical cooperation.

The two ministers held talks this evening. Mikhailidhis stated after the meeting that the talks were fruitful and dealt with the developments in the Middle East, the peace process, and the Cypriot problem. He said that the two countries agreed on the importance of supporting the peace process, noting that he had expressed his country's appreciation for Egypt's leading role in the peace process.

Regarding the situation in Bosnia, he said the two countries agreed on the importance of putting an end to hostilities and to the killing and displacement of the Bosnian people.

The Cypriot foreign minister said that the two countries emphasized the importance of solving the Cypriot problem and to provide prosperity for all the members of the Greek and Cypriot [as heard] people and to ensure security and stability in Cyprus.

He also emphasized Cyprus' support for the UN plan to find a solution to the Cypriot problem.

Meets Mubarak

NC2012123393 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1100 GMT 20 Dec 93

[Text] President Muhammad Husni Mubarak this morning received Cypriot Foreign Minister Alekos Mikhailidhis. The meeting was attended by Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa, as well as the permanent undersecretary at the Cypriot Foreign Ministry and Cypriot Ambassador in Cairo Yeoryios Yeoryiadhis.

After the meeting, the Cypriot foreign minister stated that the meeting was very constructive and that he had handed President Mubarak a message from the Cypriot president. He also invited President Mubarak to officially visit Cyprus. The Cypriot foreign minister said that he explained during his meeting with President Mubarak the developments of the Cyprus question. He also conveyed to President Mubarak the appreciation of the Cypriot people and government for the continued support Egypt gives his country.

Libya

Scottish Prosecutor: Lockerbie File 'Still Open'

PM2112114293 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 20 Dec 93 pp 1, 4

[Report by Husni Khashabah: "Scottish Prosecutor Tells AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT: Lockerbie File Still Open and We Will Study Any New Evidence"]

[Excerpt] London—The Scottish Prosecution Service yesterday stressed to AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT that the file of the investigation into the Lockerbie case is still open.

The British Foreign Office has neither confirmed or denied yesterday's reports of the existence of new "evidence" to the effect that Libya is not the only perpetrator in the Lockerbie operation, which claimed 270 lives five years ago, and that this "evidence" points to the implication of Iran and other Arab states. A spokesman for the Foreign Office answered AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT's query in this connection. He said: If anyone has "new evidence," he has to submit it to the Crown Prosecution Service (the general prosecutor), because it is the quarter investigating the case.

AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT put to the Crown Prosecution Service in Scotland the point raised by THE SUNDAY TIMES yesterday and asked whether the "evidence" listed by the newspaper would be taken account of to reopen the investigation into the Lockerbie case. A spokesman for the Prosecution Service said: The Prosecution Service remains convinced that it has sufficient evidence to justify the charges filed against the two (Libyan) suspects. However, the investigation remains open, and we will examine any evidence available to us.

The spokesman read over the telephone a written statement which says that the Crown Prosecution Service cannot comment on any questions relating to evidence in the Lockerbie case. However, the investigation is still open.

The Foreign Office spokesman said that the Foreign Office abstains from comment because what THE SUNDAY TIMES published is merely speculation and it cannot see new evidence in it. If the newspaper has such evidence, let it submit it to the authorities investigating the case. [passage omitted]

Sanctions Seen Having 'Little Impact'

NC1912075693 Paris AFP in English 0430 GMT 19 Dec 93

[By Lamia Radi]

[Text] Tripoli, Dec 19 (AFP)—The U.N. sanctions on Libya have had little impact on peoples' daily lives.

"We have everything in Libya," Salah 'Abd-al-Rahman, a merchant in the al-Rashid market, said as he ushered a visitor into his shop stacked with imported items from Taiwanese radios to American shampoos.

The relatively few Libyans who travel were the only ones to complain openly of the sanctions, saying the ban on international flights forced them to take long road trips via Tunisia and Egypt.

Diplomats agreed that sanctions first imposed in April last year to punish Tripoli over its alleged involvement in the Lockerbie bombing have had little impact other than to increase prices and force the government to cut subsidies a little.

They said the people here were fatalistic and would likely take matters in stride.

"We don't need anyone and we're happy with what we produce locally," 'Abd-al-Rahman said, referring to the possibility of even stiffer sanctions.

A freeze on assets abroad and a ban on oil-related equipment took effect December 1 after Tripoli continued its refusal to surrender two suspects in the 1988 bombing of a Pan Am airliner over Lockerbie, Scotland, killing 270 people.

They added to diplomatic sanctions and a ban on air traffic as well as weapons purchases that took effect on April 15, 1992.

'Abd-al-Rahman's bookkeeper 'Uthman Faris said: "If the Western countries think they're going to make us bend to their will by banning the sale of our oil, we will cover our oil wells and close them, as the guide says."

Libyan leader Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi has pledged to set fire to the oil wells if sanctions target Libya's main revenue earner.

Foreign workers complained more about the sanctions.

On the square of Bourguiba mosque in the heart of Tripoli, Habu Baha'-al-Din waited for the driver to finish loading bags and boxes onto the mini-bus taking him to his native village in northern Sudan.

He could once fly to an airport in northern Sudan and then travel by road to his village in less than a day, but now the trip took 10 days over rugged terrain, he said.

Al-Jubayli Ibrahim, a store salesman from the central Sudanese region of Kordofan, said the effects of the embargo are "beginning to be felt."

Many of his countrymen who work in the trade and construction industry have returned home, he said.

In hotels, where many of the employees are Moroccan, a waiter said he has not received his wages for nine months and that he stayed on in Libya only in the hope he could recover his back pay.

A Libyan official replied: "This is absolutely false. No reasonable person would wait so long."

But many hotel workers said they were motivated by the money they could make through black market currency dealing.

In the restaurant of one hotel, the dollar traded for 3.5 Libyan dinars while the bank in the same hotel offered the official rate of 0.31 dinar for the dollar.

On year ago, one dollar fetched only two dinars on the black market, another sign the sanctions are having some effect.

Besides Sudanese and Moroccans, Egyptians and Filipinos make up the bulk of Libya's foreign work force.

"The sanctions have a psychological impact," but other than raising prices, have relatively little impact on the common man, a diplomat said earlier this month.

A freeze on Libyans' foreign assets do not affect consumer goods such as private cars purchased abroad with cash and without the use of bank credits, he explained.

In general, the new sanctions will not have an immediate impact since revenues from the sale of oil and agricultural products are not included in the new U.N. Security Council resolution.

Further on Disappearance of Mansur al-Kikhya

Wife Appeals to al-Qadhdhafi

NC2012203693 London MBC Television in Arabic 1500 GMT 20 Dec 93

[Text] Diplomatic sources in Cairo said President Mubarak's adviser Usamah al-Baz has gone to Libya on a secret mission to meet with Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi. Their talks will deal with the Lockerbie issue and the recent disappearance of Libyan opposition ist Mansur al-Kikhya in Cairo.

Tawfiq Gazulit interviewed al-Kikhya's wife in London today.

[Begin recording] [Gazulit] The disappearance of Libyan political dissident Mansur al-Kikhya has generated Arab and world reaction. In light of U.S. President Clinton's request to Egyptian President Husni Mubarak to intervene to save al-Kikhya, al-Baz left suddenly for Tripoli.

[Baha' al-Kikhya] I am optimistic that Egypt and Libya, as friendly countries, will cooperate to resolve this crisis and secure the safe release of my husband.

[Gazulit] Mrs. Baha' al-Kikhya believes that her husband was abducted by Libyan men, but she does not know his whereabouts.

[Baha' al-Kikhya] I take this opportunity, through MBC, to appeal to Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi to release my husband if he is in Libya. Al-Qadhdhafi knows that my husband, although he is an oppositionist, is a peaceful and democratic dissident who believes in dialogue. I appeal to him to return my husband safely to me and my children. I believe that this is an opportunity for him to prove to the world—to the Libyan and Arab people and to the whole world—that he is not so bad.

[Gazulit] As the Libyan opposition is questioning the safety of their members, especially those headquartered in Egypt, Mrs. Baha' al-Kikhya affirms that optimism is her only weapon for the return of her husband to her and her children. [end recording]

Opposition Official Comments

PM2112100893 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 18 Dec 93 pp 1, 4

['Ali al-Salih and Muhammad Sadiq report: "Washington Considering Granting al-Kikhya U.S. Nationality"]

[Excerpts] London, Washington—Libyan sources in London have told AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT that the U.S. Administration is considering granting U.S. nationality retroactively to Mansur al-Kikhya, secretary general of the Libyan National Alliance opposed to President Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi's regime, who disappeared in the Egyptian capital on 10 December.

Asked about her opinion of this, al-Kikhya's wife told AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT: "My information is that my husband applied for U.S. nationality long ago and that he should qualify for it in two months." [passage omitted]

Ibrahim 'Umaysh, official in charge of information in the Libyan National Alliance led by al-Kikhya, stressed the Egyptian authorities' interest in the case of al-Kikhya's disappearance. [passage omitted]

On the telephone call al-Kikhya's wife received, claiming that he is in Libya, the Libyan opposition ist said: "We believe that the telephone call was from one of Mansur's relatives and designed merely to reassure here."

'Umaysh did not rule out the possibility of al-Kikhya's being in Libya, pointing out that "no quarter is expected to target him except Libyan organs, but we have no irrefutable evidence." He added: "All I can say is that Mansur did not take any precautions, nor has he ever refused to meet with any Libyan, even the regime's elements, to discuss the homeland's issues."

Asked whether there are other, nonpolitical reasons behind his disappearance, 'Umaysh said: "At the personal level, Mansur has no enemies. He is an honorable man who is liked by everyone, and we consider him a real democratic force."

'Umaysh categorically denied any involvement by Egyptian security services in the matter. He said: "I do not believe that at all." He said that the aim of the rumor is to divert the course of the investigation being conducted by these services. [passage omitted]

Al-Qadhdhafi Receives Message From Yemen Leaders

LD1912150693 Tripoli JANA in English 1420 GMT 19 Dec 93

[Text] Tripoli, al-Kanun [December] 19, JAMAHIRIYAH NEWS AGENCY—The leader of the revolution received the secretary general of the general people's committee for unity on his return from the mission entrusted to him by the leader in Yemen.

During his visit to Yemen, the secretary general met with the Yemeni President 'Ali Abdallah Salih and Vice President 'Ali Salim al-Bid.

The president and vice president requested the secretary general to convey their thanks and appreciation to the leader of the revolution for his keen interest in the unity of Yemen within which context the leader sent his personal envoy to sisterly Yemen. The president and vice president of Yemen asserted that the unity of Yemen will remain firm and not to be fearful about it and that the Arab people in Yemen are interested in their unity and will find the appropriate solution which will affirm unity and democracy.

Mauritania

President Returns From Official Visit to France

AB2012220893 Nouakchott ORTM Radio in French 1930 GMT 20 Dec 93

[Excerpt] President Maaouiya Ould Sid'Ahmed Taya returned to Nouakchott this morning after an official visit to France. On his arrival, the president of the Republic was welcomed by Prime Minister Sidi Mohamed Ould Boubaker, the members of the government, the office of the president of the Republic, the wali [governor], and the mayor of Nouakchott.

The president of the Republic made the following statement to the press: I have returned from Paris after an official visit to France on 14-16 December at the invitation of His Excellency Francois Mitterrand, president of the French Republic. On this occasion, I held fruitful discussions with high French authorities and reviewed bilateral cooperation and all issues of common interest. These discussions will without doubt contribute to strengthening the friendly relations between France and Mauritania.

In Paris, I also chaired the opening ceremony of an exhibition entitled Mauritania: Land of Men, organized by the Institute of the Arab World. [passage omitted]

National Assembly Approves 1994 Draft Budget

LD1812231393 Nouakchott ORTM Radio in Arabic 2030 GMT 18 Dec 93

[Excerpt] The National Assembly today approved the government's 1994 draft budget. The deputies first discussed the draft budget before approving it in an open session this morning. The 1994 budget totals 38.169 billion ouguiyas. [passage omitted]

Morocco

Ministry Issues Statement on Draft Financial Bill

LD2112015493 Rabat RTM Television Network in Arabic 2030 GMT 20 Dec 93

[Excerpts] This evening, at the royal palace in Rabat, His Majesty King Hassan II, God make him victorious, flanked by His Royal Highness Crown Prince Sidi Mohamed, chaired a council of ministers' meeting. The Ministry of Information has issued a statement on this: [passage omitted] The council of ministers' meeting was devoted to studying the financial bill to draw up the 1994 budget. On this occasion, Finance Minister Mohamed Sagou reviewed the general outlines of the draft of this financial bill, which mainly deals with maintaining fundamental balances and keeping the deficit at 1.5 percent and inflation under 4 percent.

Furthermore, this draft financial bill includes measures that encourage public and private investments and enhance employment. The bill will also considerably increase spending on social nature. His majesty underlined the importance, according to this financial bill, of establishing a special fund with a budget of 100 billion centimes drawn from revenues obtained from the transfer of public enterprises into the private sector to enhance youth employment.

Regarding this issue, his majesty made clear that when the reasons for passing the law on the transfer of public enterprises into the private sector were put forward, it was mentioned that the revenues from this transfer would be earmarked for investments. [passage omitted]

His majesty reminded the participants that the state, which bore the costs of sovereignty, found itself 17 years ago having to confront the needs of defending the unity of its soil and bearing the financial burdens resulting from it, including doubling the salaries of military and security personnel and civil servants. [passage omitted]

To facilitate the work of those investors, the king called on his government to consolidate law and order in business relations by establishing administrative and commercial courts, as well as by implementing the rulings of these courts.

Thus, if human rights in their political sense were well guaranteed, the economic and social rights of individuals and groups should be, as of now, our main concern. That is topped by respect for private ownership, which very often has been exposed to dangers from administrations, contradicting the laws regulating expropriation for the sake of public benefit.

For this reason, King Hassan II, God make him victorious, requested his government to draft a socio-economic charter in which the rights and obligations of Maghreban and foreign investors were clearly defined

and guaranteed on the eve of signing the GATT—whose commissions responded to the invitation by the King in 1991—agreement in Marrakech

The council of ministers endorsed the draft financial bill and the decrees pertaining to the draft laws related to it. That concerns a draft law that changes and supplements the free financial zones, a draft law that changes the law on foreign trade, a draft law that supplements the law that set up the central security fund, and a draft law that changes Chapter 176 of the law relating to local community taxes and their commissions.

The council of ministers also endorsed the following draft laws: draft law 9333, which endorses decree 388912 issued on 13 October 1992, on imposing fees for setting up ground stations specialized in receiving radio and television signals via satellite. [passage omitted]

Sudan

'Sabotage Plot' Trial Begins; Sessions Open

EA2012162293 Khartoum SUNA in English 0920 GMT 20 Dec 93

[Text] Khartoum, 20 Dec (SUNA)—The first session of the sabotage plot trial has started here today. The number of the accused in the failed plot which aimed at bombing the public structures in Khartoum and other Sudanese towns amounted to 28. Seventeen of (?them) are abroad. Among them is [former Army commander in chief General] Fathi Ahmad Ali.

The charges include espionage, revealing and receiving information and documents, and criminal connivance and encouragement of committing crimes. It has been decided that the sessions are to be opened for public. AL-INQADH AL-WATANI daily newspaper mentioned that the accused were allowed to meet their lawyers.

Joint Ministerial Meeting With Ethiopia Begins

EA2012163193 Omdurman Republic of Sudan Radio Network in Arabic 1300 GMT 20 Dec 93

[Text] Today at the Friendship Hall in Khartoum, the meeting of the joint ministerial Sudanese-Ethiopian committee opened under the chairmanship of the vice president, Major General al-Zubayr Muhammad Salih, on behalf of Sudan and Mr. Tamirat Layne, the Ethiopian prime minister, on behalf of Ethiopia.

Layne said on arrival this afternoon that during the talks with the Sudanese side there would be a follow-up of the implementation of the committee's resolutions adopted during its second session in Addis Ababa last year. He said he would review with the Sudanese officials aspects of cooperation between the two countries in all fields with a view to strengthening bilateral relations. There would also be an evaluation of the implementation of the agreements concluded during the committee's first two sessions. He said there would also be a discussion of regional issues of common concern.

Sides View Cooperation

EA2012194493 Omdurman Republic of Sudan Radio Network in Arabic 1500 GMT 20 Dec 93

[Text] The vice president of the Republic, Major General al-Zubayr Muhammad Salih, addressed the third session of the joint ministerial Sudanese-Ethiopian committee at the Friendship Hall in Khartoum this afternoon. He said the meeting was a continuation of the earlier joint meetings and was expected to promote general cooperation between the two countries in the political, economic, technical, social, cultural and security fields. His excellency said Sudan appreciated the constant efforts of fraternal Ethiopia, together with other states in the region, to contribute towards finding a durable political solution to the problem of southern Sudan.

His excellency said: This is an important and historic stage in the relations between our two countries. We are now opening the file of the joint ministerial committee in its third session in confirmation of our determination to work jointly, seriously and fruitfully. He added: We look to this committee to remove the obstacles which prevented implementation of earlier commitments. We now aspire to achieve good results reflecting the hopes and ambitions of our two peoples to bring closer our centuries-old historic and cultural relations.

The meeting was also addressed by Mr. Tamirat Layne, the Ethiopian prime minister, who said the declaration signed last October represented a starting point of the movement of the two countries in the economic and social fields. His excellency confirmed that the two countries held similar points of view on all issues.

UN Acknowledges Relief Program Achievements

EA1912200193 Khartoum SUNA in English 1612 GMT 19 Dec 93

[Text] Khartoum, 19 Dec (SUNA)—The United Nations has acknowledged the considerable achievements of the government of Sudan in implementing the agreement signed between the two sides last August emphasizing that in 1993 both the deliveries of relief assistance and the number of destinations accessed were greatly above the respective levels registered in the preceding years.

The acknowledgement was expressed during talks held here during the period 9th-14th December between a UN team led by the UN special envoy for humanitarian affairs, Ambassador Vieri Traxler, and a government team led by Dr. Ibrahim 'Ubaydullah, minister of state for social planning.

The two sides conducted a thorough review of the implementation of the August agreement and dealt with other issues related to the humanitarian activities of the UN and the NGOs [non-governmental organization] in

the Sudan with a view to increase their effectiveness in meeting the needs of the affected people.

The two sides underscored that significant increase in the volume of deliveries and number of locations accessed by railway and river routes and that the new process for the issuance of flight clearances has worked successfully.

They further agreed that the terms established in August for the issuance of visa and travel permits have been respected.

The UN and the Sudan acknowledged that the timeliness and regularity of the UN reporting to the Relief and Rehabilitation Commission (RRC) was improved and that coordination between the two sectors of Operation Life-line Sudan (OLS) has been strengthened and streamlined.

The two sides agreed on further steps with respect to the August 1993 agreement and restated that OLS operations would continue to be conducted in strict compliance with the principle of OLS. They further agreed that consultations between the government and the UN would be continued in order to further their cooperation in OLS.

They stated that in light of the recent UN General Assembly resolution on emergency humanitarian assistance to Sudan, efforts would be exerted to provide support in building up the capacity of the relevant national institutions, particularly RCC in managing relief and rehabilitation operations.

As regards cooperation with NGOs the UN mission acknowledged the considerable efforts of the government in facilitating the humanitarian activities of NGOs maintaining that the specific terms established in the August agreement have been respected.

The UN mission expressed appreciation for the inclusion of NGOs in assessment of mission as a way for developing appropriate programs.

The two parties stressed that the improved climate for cooperation should encourage the submission of new projects to meet relief and rehabilitation requirements, calling for the continuation of the practice of exchanges of views among all parties concerned.

Agreement was also reached on the advisability of emphasizing the transition from relief to rehabilitation in projects formulation and that all parties will work towards strengthening the capacities of the local relief and rehabilitation operations. This should include inter alia strengthening the Council of Voluntary Agencies (COVA) and national NGOs. A mission to Sudan will be undertaken by the UN special envoy for humanitarian affairs in the last week of next April.

Minister Says Wage Increases Effective in 1994

EA1712223993 Omdurman Republic of Sudan Radio Network in Arabic 0430 GMT 17 Dec 93

[Text] Finance Minister Abdullahi Hasan Ahmad has said that the salaries and wage increases announced recently by the president of the republic will become effective from 1 January 1994. His excellency said that the cost of this for the second half of the financial year 1993-94 will amount to 6 billion Sudanese pounds. This will be in addition to increases for pensioners and subsidies for destitute families. The minister said that the competent authorities were now seeking sources for the actual financing, so that no deficit occurs in the budget.

Tunisia

'Arafat Briefs Ben Ali on Results of Oslo Talks

LD2012184493 Tunis Tunisian Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 20 Dec 93

[Excerpt] The head of state met Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat at Carthage Palace this afternoon.

Following the meeting, the Palestinian president made a statement in which he said that he was very pleased at this meeting, and that it came during difficult circumstances through which the Palestinian issue and the Palestinian-Israeli talks were going, especially after the Israelis had deliberately delayed the withdrawal under various pretexts, and attempted to bypass the understanding agreed on and signed at the American White House, the procedures of the implementation of which were supposed to have started instantly on 13 December. He also expressed his regret that that did not take place. He said that the Israelis had started to raise a number of problems.

President Yasir 'Arafat added that he briefed the head of state on the details of the Oslo meeting which ended yesterday, and on the contacts which preceded it between the Palestinians and the numerous sides. He said that another meeting was scheduled to be held in Paris tomorrow and hoped to reach some agreements through it.

The Palestinian president said that all we demanded was a precise and faithful adherence to what had been signed in Washington, and the preservation of Palestinian dignity and the rights of the Palestinian people during the transitional period.

After reviewing the points of difference at this stage, and expressing hope of overcoming them as soon as possible, the Palestinian president said: I thanked President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali for the personal interest he and Tunisia paid to the cause of the Palestinian people at this sensitive stage through which they are going, during which many were trying to delay the wheel of history and its march. [passage omitted]

GCC Foreign Ministers Session Begins in Riyadh

LD1812134693 Riyadh SPA in English 1240 GMT 18 Dec 93

[Text] Riyadh, Dec 18, SPA—GCC [Gulf Cooperation Council] foreign ministers began today their 49th session at the venue of the GCC secretariat general here under the chairmanship of Prince Sa'ud al-Faysal, the foreign minister.

The GCC groups the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates, Oman, Qatar and Bahrain.

Foreign Ministers Preview Summit

LD1912141793 Riyadh SPA in English 1235 GMT 19 Dec 93

[Text] Riyadh, Dec 19, SPA—Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) foreign ministers have described the 14th summit of the GCC leaders in Riyadh as an important historical event which represents the will of the GCC leaders and their determination to complete the blessed procession of the GCC states.

In statements to the SAUDI PRESS AGENCY here Saturday, the ministers said the summit would have good results and would boost the joint action and solidarity among the six nations.

The ministers said the summit would realize the ambitions and aspirations of the Gulf peoples.

Bahrain Foreign Minister Shaykh Mohammad Bin-Mubarak Al Khalifah said they were fully confident that the summit would boost the procession of the GCC states.

He said "the GCC states are concerned over cooperation among them as well as concerned over the security and stability of the Gulf region" Shaykh Mohammad said.

For his part Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad al-Sabah, Kuwait deputy premier and foreign minister, expressed his delight over the convening of the 14th GCC summit in the kingdom under the leadership of custodian of the two holy mosques King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-Aziz.

He said all participants would cooperate with the kingdom for realizing the aspirations of the Gulf peoples and making this summit a success.

Shaykh Sabah hailed the efforts undertaken by King Fahd to strengthen cooperation and relations among the six nations.

He said the summit would assess the past accomplishments of the GCC and discuss the coming phase.

Shaykh Sabah extolled the achievements of the GCC in all sectors.

Oman Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Yusuf Bin-'Alawi Bin-'Abdallah hoped the 14th summit would fulfill the ambitions of the peoples of the region.

Qatar Foreign Minister Shaykh Hamad Bin-Jasim Al Thani hoped also that the summit would achieve more welfare and more well-being for the council's peoples.

Foreign Ministers Discuss Summit Agenda

LD2112104593 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 0958 GMT 21 Dec 93

[Text] Riyadh, 21 Dec—The Gulf Cooperation Council foreign ministers held a meeting at al-Dar'iyyah Palace in Riyadh this morning under the chairmanship of the [Saudi] Foreign Minister Prince Sa'ud al-Faysal.

The foreign ministers continued their discussion of the items included in the agenda of the 14th session of the leaders of GCC countries.

Issues for GCC Leaders' Meeting Previewed

NC2012143093 Paris AFP in English 1329 GMT 20 Dec 93

[By Souleiman Nimer]

[Text] Riyadh, Dec 20 (AFP)—Leaders of the six-nation Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) were to discuss plans to bolster regional security at a three-day summit opening here later Monday.

Saudi Arabia's King Fahd was to open the summit and deliver a report from the GCC's secretary general, Shaykh Fahim Bin-Sultan al-Qasimi.

The summit will focus on two projects to strengthen their joint military force, codenamed Peninsula Shield, and the deployment of an early warning air defense system.

GCC defense ministers meeting last month in Abu Dhabi recommended boosting the force based in Hafr al-Batin, northwestern Saudi Arabia, from 8,000 to 25,000 troops.

In their closed-door talks, the leaders of Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Qatar, Bahrain and Oman will review agenda items agreed at a foreign ministers' meeting on Saturday.

The Saudi daily AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT on Monday stressed the importance of "bolstering the GCC's cohesion in a turbulent world marked by a rise in conflicts."

Kuwait's foreign minister, Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad al-Sabah, told reporters that "Iraq continues to worry" the Arab Gulf states, almost three years after the end of the 1991 Gulf war.

A U.S.-led coalition ousted Baghdad's forces from the emirate after a seven-month occupation.

Shaykh al-Sabah said Iraq "still does not recognize the borders with Kuwait and refuses to free Kuwaitis it holds."

UAE Foreign Minister Rashid 'Abdallah slammed what he called the continued Iranian occupation of three strategic islands claimed by his country in the southern Gulf.

The GCC must reaffirm its solidarity with Kuwait and the UAE against Iraq and Iran, the two foreign ministers said.

Apart from Gulf issues, the GCC leaders were expected to discuss ties with the rest of the world, the Arab-Israeli peace talks, and the Arab boycott of Israel.

"This matter will be addressed at the summit," said Shaykh Fahim, referring to the embargo.

GCC leaders have said they would abide by "an Arab League decision" on the boycott.

On the multilateral level, the leaders will discuss economic issues such as the proposed unification of customs duties that has been under discussion for several years.

Unification of the tariffs, ranging between zero and 20 percent, depending on the country, is key to the creation of a Gulf common market, under an economic accord the six states signed in 1982.

Assistant Secretary General 'Abdallah al-Quways on Sunday urged the GCC states to speed up their economic integration in a world marked by the emergence of economic blocs.

The summit will also review proposed cooperation between GCC financial markets and unification of currencies. It follows years of haggling to align exchange rates amid plans to introduce a single GCC currency.

The GCC states produce about a fifth of the world's oil and sit atop more than 40 percent of world crude reserves.

Leaders View Prospects for Summit

LD2012203993 Riyadh SPA in English 1917 GMT 20 Dec 93

[Text] Riyadh, Dec 20, SPA—On the occasion of convening the 14th session of the Gulf Cooperation Council's (GCC) Supreme Council here today, the Amir of Bahrain Shaykh 'Isa Bin-Salman Al Khalifah expressed happiness for his arrival in the kingdom and meeting the custodian of the two holy mosques and other GCC leaders later today.

He said the summit is especially important because of the political, economic and security issues on its agenda which aim at realizing the prosperity, progress, security and stability of GCC peoples, in view of current international and regional developments.

He applauded the political and economic achievements realized by the Council since its establishment and stressed that they still do not represent all the hopes and ambitions that GCC leaders desire for their peoples.

The Bahraini amir added that their sincere will and determination as well as the religious, historic, geographic and lingual ties linking the six member states will enable them to overcome all obstacles and reach the desired goals.

He also congratulated the custodian of the two holy mosques King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz and the Saudi Government on the establishment of the shura (consultative) council and wished its members success in all efforts that boost the development process led by King Fahd, so that the kingdom would perform its pioneering role in preserving the stability and security of the region.

The amir of Kuwait, Shaykh Jabir al-Ahmad al-Sabah has expressed deep relief for his arrival in the kingdom to attend the 14th GCC summit and stressed that he is always looking forward to meeting the custodian of the two holy mosques "with whom I am accustomed to discuss all issues related to our bilateral relations" as well as Gulf, Arab and Islamic issues.

He pointed to the Saudi monarch's experience, farsightedness and wisdom as well as his enthusiasm about and keenness on Arab and Islamic issues.

He said Monday's meeting in Saudi Arabia would provide GCC leaders with a valuable opportunity to meet other GCC leaders "with whom we always exchange consultations and viewpoints on all our issues."

He expressed optimism on probing these issues under the chairmanship of the custodian of the two holy mosques "who we hold, and his sisterly country, in high regard and great appreciation."

Shaykh Jabir said the hopes of GCC peoples focus on guaranteeing a safe life during which they can work with reassurance and confidence away from tensions and fears to build a flourishing future.

He also pointed to the GCC peoples' ambitions for more integration and close cooperation among them as well as for taking the appropriate measures towards principal positions on Arab and Islamic issues.

He expressed hope that successful positive steps would be taken to realize the ambitions of GCC peoples.

"It gives us pleasure to seize the opportunity of convening the 14th GCC summit to express our feelings and those of the people of the United Arab Emirates, the cordial brotherhood and deep appreciation, for my brother the custodian of the two holy mosques and the brotherly people of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, wishing them more goodness, progress thanks to the wise leadership and comprehensive development realized all over the kingdom," United Arab Emirates (UAE) President Shaykh Zayid Bin-Sultan Al Nuhayyan stated upon his arrival.

He said it also pleases him to have the opportunity to meet the leaders of the GCC and exchange views and

consultations with them to realize the prosperity and progress of the GCC peoples.

He pointed to the good accomplishments realized by the GCC over the past few years and the success of joint cooperation among the six member states.

He said these accomplishments should double our keenness on fostering cooperation and boosting efforts to maintain the effective solidarity of GCC states, which has been proven by the catastrophe and confirmed by changes dictated by the Gulf Crisis.

He added that GCC states have emerged more powerful and cohesive after the crisis out of their belief in their solidarity and unity of their decision because the destiny of them all is one.

Shaykh Khalifah Bin-Hamad Al Thani, the amir of Qatar, expressed his finest regards and the greetings of the Qatari people to the custodian of the two holy mosques and the Saudi people and wished him good health and happiness and the Saudi people more progress and prosperity.

He also extended greetings to other GCC leaders and wished them more flourishment for their countries.

He stressed that current international and Arab developments require intensifying GCC efforts to boost brotherly solidarity and cement existing cooperation among its members to serve the interests of Arab Gulf peoples and observe the strategic integration of this important region in all fields to bolster security and stability.

In similar statements upon his arrival, Sultan Qabus of Oman said the hopes pinned on the 14th GCC summit make it extremely important and make it imperative to have clear vision, calculated work in accordance with fixed stances and brotherly ties binding the GCC states, and in view of international developments.

He said he was looking forward to the success of this summit on only on the level of official relations but to realize more gains tangible to GCC citizens and to boost joint cooperation, security and stability in this vital part of the world.

He expressed confidence in the far-sightedness of the custodian of the two holy mosques which will enable these meetings to realize the hopes of GCC leaders.

"On this occasion, it pleases us to extend special greetings to the brotherly people of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and our brother, the custodian of the two holy mosques King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz and congratulate them on all the accomplishments realized by the kingdom," he concluded.

King Fahd Opens Session of GCC Summit

LD2012223193 Riyadh Saudi Arabian Television Network in Arabic 1800 GMT 20 Dec 93

[Text of Saudi Arabian King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz Al Saud address at opening session of the Gulf Cooperation Council, GCC, summit in Riyad—live]

[Text] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate; prayers and peace be upon the most honorable of prophets and messengers, our master Mohammed, and upon his family and companions. Your Majesties, Your Highness, brother participants: Peace and God's mercy and blessings be upon you. It is a source of pleasure for me to welcome my brothers, their majesties and highnesses, in their other country, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. On this occasion that is dear to us we meet again in amity and felicity. We are being brought together by a single joint objective; it is to work for the good and progress of our peoples and homelands.

First of all I would like to offer my brother [United Arab Emirates president] His Highness Shaykh Zayid Bin-Sultan Al Nuhayyan my thanks for the efforts he has made during our council's previous session. This is not surprising, knowing the sincere efforts made by his highness for what is good and right.

My brothers, the achievements made during the previous session of our council have become a shining beacon in the history of our nation. That would not have been possible without the success granted by God and then the sincere efforts which we all made by putting the interests of our people [first] in the confident steps we have taken.

Praise be to God, these confident steps have been fruitful in all spheres, and their effects have become evident in the opulence, prosperity and progress experienced by our peoples.

What has been accomplished would not have been achieved without our commitment to our Islamic faith and our deep belief in the loftiness of our aims and in the strength of the ties binding us.

Brothers, this conference of ours takes place this year under critical circumstances which demand a lot of continuous hard work from us to face up to the challenges to our region. The Iraqi regime is still evading the implementation of the UN Security Council resolutions and is continuing its false claims on and threats to Kuwait. The international community must continue its efforts to force the Iraqi regime to implement all the UN Security Council resolutions related to the Iraqi aggression and to put an end to the practices which violate the Kuwaiti sovereignty and independence. We also appeal to the international community to double its efforts to release the Kuwaiti prisoners of war and the detainees of other nationalities in Iraq.

To talk about something else, we hope that the Iranian Government will respond to the sincere invitation by the

UAE to negotiate and settle the existing conflict over the three islands [Tunb al-Kubra, Tunb al-Sughra, and Abu Musa] peacefully according to the international laws and conventions and the principles of good neighborliness.

As for the new developments in the peace talks which led to the signing of the Declaration of Principles between the PLO and Israel, we hope that that initiative would be the first correct step towards a just, permanent, and comprehensive settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict.

The suffering of our brothers in Somalia was and still is a source of pain for all of us. Therefore, we hope that the efforts by the UN on the political and humanitarian levels would enable Somalia to overcome its ordeal and would save the brotherly Muslim people of Somalia.

As for the bloody and painful tragedy which the people of Bosnia- Herzegovina are experiencing and who are still facing the ugliest racist annihilation war by the Serbs and the Croats—despite all appeals by international and humanitarian organizations and despite the negotiations they are conducting—we appeal to the international community to stand by justice against injustice and to take practical steps to enable the people of Bosnia-Herzegovina to attain their legitimate right to defend themselves, to lift the arms sanctions imposed on Bosnia-Herzegovina, to implement the legitimate international resolutions and to respect the principles of international legal rights.

Your Majesties, we feel optimistic that tomorrow will be, God willing, brighter if intentions are sincere and efforts are united. We have, in our experience, enough richness [zad] to help us face a better future for our people and homeland in which security, tranquility and peace will prevail.

Once again, I welcome you in your country, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and I conclude this speech with God's words:

Our Lord, give us mercy from thee, and furnish us with rectitude in our affairs. God's peace, mercy, and blessings be upon you.

Papers: GCC Leaders 'Firmly Behind' Kuwait

NC2112112093 Paris AFP in English 1045 GMT 21 Dec 93

[Text] Kuwait City, Dec 21 (AFP)—Gulf leaders at a summit in Saudi Arabia have stood firmly behind Kuwait against continued threats from Iraq, newspapers said here Tuesday.

The Gulf Cooperation Council "is determined to adopt a unified and firm position against Iraqi ambitions on Kuwait," AL-WATAN daily said.

AL-RA'I AL-'AM described the Riyadh meeting as the "Kuwait summit" because King Fahd of Saudi Arabia on Monday devoted much of his opening speech to Iraqi threats against the emirate.

King Fahd urged the world community to make Baghdad comply with U.N. resolutions imposed after its 1990 invasion of Kuwait, respect Kuwait's sovereignty and independence and release Kuwaiti prisoners of war.

Baghdad denies holding any such prisoners.

Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates, Oman and Qatar make up the Gulf Cooperation Council.

Kuwait

AL-SIYASAH Urges GCC To End Boycott of Israel

LD2112112693 Kuwait KUNA in Arabic 1020 GMT 21 Dec 93

[Excerpt] Kuwait, 21 December—On the occasion of convening the 14th Gulf summit in Riyadh, a Kuwaiti newspaper today urged the GCC leaders to end the boycott of Israel as a first step toward putting an end to hostility between the Arabs and Israel.

The AL-SIYASAH newspaper said in its editorial under the title "Do Not Hesitate in Ending the Boycott of Israel" that the Gulf states' decision to end the economic boycott of Israel has nothing to do with the Arab League or other parties who use this boycott as a political document to strengthen their negotiating stance with Israel.

The newspaper added that the Palestinians decided to sign a peace agreement with Israel without obtaining an Arab consensus, and for this reason the GCC countries should take the lead in putting an end to this boycott. [passage omitted]

Colonel Denies Intent To Change Patriot System

LD2112092993 Kuwait KUNA in Arabic 0630 GMT 21 Dec 93

[Excerpt] Kuwait, 21 Dec (KUNA)—A Kuwaiti Air Force commander has denied that the Defense Ministry intends changing the Patriot system and replacing it with another.

Assistant commander of the Air Force staff Air Force Colonel Mahmud al-Ruzuqi, in a statement to AL-WATAN, says that Kuwait has not conducted any negotiations to purchase the Russian "AS 300" air-defense system, and that the efficiency of the American Patriot system [words indistinct]. Al-Ruzuqi points out that the number of existing Patriot batteries satisfies Kuwaiti needs in protecting strategic targets, and also that it is pointless to amass more weaponry systems and incur extra financial and human costs. [passage omitted]

United Arab Emirates

Information Minister Previews Riyadh GCC Summit

PM2012113793 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 17 Dec 93 p 5

[Interview with United Arab Emirates Information Minister Khalfan Muhammad al-Rumi by 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Sadiqi and Taj-al-Din 'Abd-al-Haqq in Abu Dhabi; date not given]

[Excerpts] [AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT] How do you view the upcoming summit in Riyadh, and what are your aspirations and expectations in this connection?

[Al-Rumi] We will not try to repeat the traditional phrases that accompany every Gulf summit, namely that it is being held under extraordinary conditions or is of special importance, or any of the rhetorical phrases to which we have been accustomed and which have lost a lot of their meaning and importance.

We look at the summit meeting as the culmination of constant and continued work carried out by the specialized ministerial committees or the Gulf Cooperation Council [GCC] General Secretariat. This work—with all its details—will be presented to the GCC leaders to enable them to make the right decision in order to put it into force. [passage omitted]

[AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT] In light of the principles you mentioned, where do the three United Arab Emirates [UAE] islands occupied by Iran fit on the upcoming summit's agenda?

[Al-Rumi] The issue of the three occupied islands is not new to the summit's agenda. It was discussed at previous summits. It was also discussed at a number of specialized ministerial meetings. All the meetings in question stressed two principles to which the UAE and its GCC sisters are committed. They are: the emphasis on the UAE's historical and legal claim to its three islands, namely Tunb al-Kubra, Tunb al-Sughra, and Abu Musa. The second is a commitment to dialogue and peaceful means to solve this problem.

And as UAE President Shaykh Zayid Bin-Sultan Al Nuhayyan said in his recent speech on the occasion of the 22d anniversary of the establishment of the united state, the UAE continues to emphasize the need to turn to dialogue and peaceful means to end the occupation and return the three islands to UAE sovereignty in accordance with international laws and conventions and the principles of good-neighborliness.

[AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT] Some people say that there is a contradiction among the positions adopted by the GCC states with regard to handling the issue of the three occupied islands.

[Al-Rumi] That is untrue. All the GCC states are agreed on their view of the islands issue and how to resolve it. They expressed this openly in numerous statements and on various occasions.

[AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT] Some people believe that raising the islands issue may lead to an escalation that could affect the security and stability of the region.

[Al-Rumi] First, the islands issue is not new. It has been raised officially and legally since 1971. And at no stage has the UAE abandoned its historical and legal claim to the three islands.

As for the escalation, the UAE has announced on several occasions that it rejects the principle of using force or threatening to use it as a means to resolve disputes. Shaykh Zayid emphasized this recently when he said that "the UAE is committed to the principle of refusing to use force or threatening to use it as a means to resolve disputes. And, proceeding from this, it has announced its sincere desire to hold a direct dialogue with the Islamic Republic of Iran with regard to its occupation of the three UAE islands in 1971."

[AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT] Do you expect Shaykh Zayid to made an initiative and raise at the upcoming Gulf summit the issue of restoring Arab solidarity?

[Al-Rumi] That issue is not new, as Shaykh Zayid Bin-Sultan Al Nuhayyan has actually raised this issue and clearly announced his call for forgiveness and for restoring solidarity. He raised it in his recent speech on national day, stressing the importance of restoring Arab solidarity. [passage omitted]

Yemen

Salih Declares Halt to Anti-YSP Campaigns

JN2012125693 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 20 Dec 93

[Excerpts] Brother Lieutenant General 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih, chairman of the Presidential Council, today attended the first orientation course for leaders of administrative units. The course is organized by the Ministry of Local Administration. Shaykh 'Abd-al-Majid al-Zandani, member of the Presidential Council, and Shaykh 'Abdallah Bin-Husayn al-Ahmar, speaker of the House of Representatives, accompanied the chairman.

Opening the course, the chairman of the Presidential Council made a speech. [passage omitted] The brother chairman of the Presidential Council expressed his great confidence that the coalition government will carry out its duties in line with the Constitution and the law, and that it will carry out its political program on which it won the confidence of the people's deputies.

The brother chairman of the Presidential Council announced a halt to media campaigns. He said: I hereby declare unilaterally, from this place, in the name of the General People's Congress [GPC] and its leaders, components, and supporters, a halt to media campaigns between the GPC and its partner, the Yemeni Socialist Party [YSP], in view of the requirements of the higher national interests. I urge the other partner, the Yemeni Reform Grouping, and the rest of the political parties and organizations and the national press to stop media vituperations, in view of the requirements of the higher national interests and because of the great damage and rift caused by these campaigns to the unity.

The brother chairman of the Presidential Council added: I repeat this appeal to all political parties and organizations and to all newsmen and honest and nationalist journalists. I urge them to deepen national unity, close ranks, and not to involve the homeland in irresponsible media vituperations. We also urge the government to seriously, honestly, and responsibly work to resolve the border dispute with our neighbor, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, in line with the promise it made in its political program after the proclamation of the Republic of Yemen on 22 May 1990.

Concluding his speech, the brother president wished participants in the course success.

U.S. Oil Firms Said Holding Talks With Iraq

NC2012155193 Paris AFP in English 1426 GMT 20 Dec 93

[Text] Nicosia, Dec 20 (AFP)—Senior Iraqi officials and representatives of U.S. and European oil firms have been holding extensive exploratory talks in Amman on possible oil projects, the Middle East Economic Survey (MEES) said Monday [20 December].

Most foreign and especially U.S. oil companies had in the past tended to hold low-profile meetings with Iraqi officials in the Jordanian capital or in Europe and did not send senior executives, the Nicosia-based newsletter said.

"It can only be assumed that the American firms have received some sort of green light from Washington before holding such senior level meetings as have recently taken place in Amman," said MEES.

The parties in the last three weeks discussed possibilities for production sharing agreements—with terms graduated according to risk—as well as technical services contracts, it said.

"MEES understands that the Iraqi team indicated that the government might be willing to settle for a minority share in some ventures," it said.

"The message implied by the Iraqis was that their main concern was directed towards the optimization of government take from taxes and royalties rather than the percentage of equity," it added.

The newsletter said that the areas being discussed include discovered but as yet undeveloped fields in southern Iraq, exploration and appraisal of other regions such as the western desert, the central area and the northwestern sector near the Syrian border.

"Iraq offered to provide the companies with seismic and geological data during the next round of talks," provided the meetings are held in Baghdad, it said.

The conclusion of any deals depends on a lifting of U.N. sanctions, which was imposed on Iraq after it invaded Kuwait in August 1990.

MEES said Iraq had been holding intermittent talks with foreign oil firms since the summer of 1991, notably the French Total and Elf Equitaine, the Italian Agip and some independent American companies it did not name.

"It is expected that a strong competitive play will gather momentum during the next few months over the establishment of a stake in the highly promising and rewarding acreage that Iraq is opening for foreign joint ventures when the sanctions are lifted," it said.

[(Clandestine) Voice of the Iraqi People in Arabic at 1500 GMT on 20 Dec adds: "Saddam Husayn's dictatorial regime continues to bargain with Iraq's economic future and resources to remain in power. Economic sources have stated that the Baghdad regime is trying to make generous financial offers to U.S. oil firms to invest in and improve the production of Iraqi oil."

["The Middle East Economic Survey [MEES] reported today that Saddam's regime is making intensive efforts to negotiate with major U.S. oil firms. However, MEES noted these firms had refused to send senior officials to Baghdad and that they are inclined to hold the meetings at lower levels."]

Kurdish Groups Clash 20 Dec; Council Formed

NC2112083293 Paris AFP in English 0737 GMT 21 Dec 93

[Text] Irbil, Dec 21 (AFP)—Two Iraqi Kurdish groups clashed in northern Iraq Monday, leaving at least 10 people dead or wounded, Kurdish officials in the region said. Mas'ud Barzani's Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP), which lost six fighters in the clashes, blamed the fight on the pro-Iranian Islamic League of Kurdistan, which suffered two casualties, according to officials of the self-declared Kurdish government in northern Iraq, a no-go area for Iraqi President Saddam Husayn.

Two bystanders were also among the casualties during the fights in Raniyah and Kou Senjaq on the border with Iran.

Kurds in the area announced Monday they were setting up a "presidential council" representing the two main Kurdish nationalist movements, to rule the self-proclaimed Kurdish autonomous region.

At a press conference in Irbil, members of the regional Kurdish "parliament" said the move was to halt fighting between Kurdish groups, some of whom have been accused of involvement in an alleged Iranian plan to destabilise northern Iraq.

Besides the heads of the Kurdish regional government and parliament, the presidential council would include Mas'ud Barzani, and Jalal Talabani, head of the Kurdistan Patriotic Union (KPU) [PUK].

Two senior members of each movement would also take part.

Over the past ten days, clashes have pitted members of the KDP against the pro-Iranian wing of the Kurdish Socialist Party and the Kurdish Islamic League. The KDP has accused these groups of fomenting trouble on behalf of Iran.

INA Reports 'Bloody Clashes'

JN2112101493 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0900 GMT 21 Dec 93

[Text] Baghdad, 21 Dec (INA)—AL-'IRAQ has disclosed that the bloody clashes involving the gangs of sabotage and agentry extended to areas outside the boundaries of al-Sulaymaniyah and Irbil Governorates in the Kurdistan Autonomous Region.

In an article today, the paper indicated that heavy weapons were used in the clashes in a manner reflecting disregard for the lives of defenseless civilians who were caught between the hammer of fear and hunger and the anvil of moral and security chaos. The paper reported that mortar shells fell within the bounds of certain populated cities.

The paper emphasized that saboteurs and agents engaged not only in criminal acts, but also in looting and vandalism including such things as electricity posts in the area between Qadir Karam and Jumujumal in the Irbil Governorate.

The clashes took place last week, pitting rival factions of agent organizations in al-Sulaymaniyah.

Meanwhile, the Legislative and Executive Councils of the Kurdistan Autonomous Region have warned against the consequences of imperialist and Zionist forces instigating their agents in the region to sow destruction, spread chaos, and split the Arab-Kurdish ranks.

Appealing to the children of our Kurdish people in Kurdistan, the two councils called for kicking out the evil and treasonous elements across the border to deny them the opportunity to hurt national rights secured under the glorious 17-30 July revolution.

The councils underlined the need to step up the struggle and revolution against agents and traitors in order to forestall their drive to further enemy plans against the Iraqi people's unity and their country's sovereignty.

Baghdad Asks Talabani To Resume Mediation

PM2112105493 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 19 Dec 93 p4

[Report by 'Adnan Husayn from London and unattributed AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT report from Amman: "Baghdad Trying To Resume Negotiations With Kurdish Leaders in the North"]

[Excerpt] Iraqi Kurdish sources have confirmed that life is back to normal in al-Sulaymaniyah and the other Kurdish towns, which were the scene of fighting and security incidents last week. Ten people were killed and 65 wounded in attacks on positions of the local Kurdish Army by a group described as "a subversive group" from the Kurdistan Socialist Party which dissolved itself last year.

Meanwhile, an informed Iraqi source has revealed that the Iraqi Government has again asked former Kurdish minister Makram Talabani to mediate between it and the Iraqi Kurdish leadership with a view to resuming the negotiations which were suspended over a year ago.

The source said that Talabani said that he would undertake the mission on condition that an authorized member of the Iraqi leadership accompanies him so that he would be committed to any agreement which might be reached.

Talabani, who has been living in Baghdad since he resigned from the post of transport minister in 1979, has shuttled several times between Baghdad and Kurdistan over the past two years in an attempt to revive the dialogue between the two sides. [passage omitted]

Talabani Views Ties With Iraq, Iran, Turkey

JN1812151693 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 16 Dec 93 p 7

[Interview with Jalal Talabani, secretary general of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan, PUK, by Zuhayr Qusaybati; in Irbil, date not given]

[Text] [Qusaybati] The Iraqi ambassador in Ankara recently emphasized that contacts are going on between Baghdad and the Kurds. Is there anything new about this?

[Talabani] There are no official contacts between the Kurdistan Front—and the PUK in particular—and the Iraqi Government. A rumor was circulated by the government and the ambassador about contacts with the Democratic Party of Kurdistan, led by Mas'ud Barzani. When we asked the brothers in the party about this, they unequivocally denied the rumor. Therefore, there are no negotiations or contacts through special channels. President Saddam Husayn recently said at a meeting with Kurdish personalities in Baghdad that the issue is no longer in the hands of the Kurds or the Iraqi Government, but is instead in U.S. hands. He said he believes there is no hope of negotiations.

[Qusaybati] It is understood that you are not prepared to resume dialogue.

[Talabani] I have been participating in dialogue with Baghdad since 1963. Thirty years passed in negotiations with successive Iraqi Governments. We did not achieve anything. This is due to the absence of democracy in Iraq. Without democracy, nothing will be resolved in Iraq, including the Kurdish question. I have no hope of resolving any problem in Iraq under the dictatorship that rejects any democratic changes in the regime.

[Qusaybati] Some people believe your experience in running the Kurdish administration under Western protection in the safe haven drives you to harden your position in rejecting any dialogue with Baghdad, as long as the protection continues?

[Talabani] This is untrue. I have been to Baghdad several times. Brother Mas'ud Barzani also went to Baghdad while international protection was there and while allied forces were deployed in the valleys and mountains of Kurdistan. Following Resolution 688, we went to Baghdad because we thought the lessons of the failed adventure had fostered a new way of thinking that would enable the government to understand the Kurdish problem in a peaceful and fraternal manner. We went there knowing that the government would be weak after its defeat in war following the aggressive adventure in Kuwait, and while Iraq was isolated from the world. We

hoped to reach a solution without being tempted by the presence of the allied forces into avoiding dialogue. Following long negotiations, the Iraqi Government convinced us that it does not accept any serious solution to the Kurdish problem or to the basic problem, that is, democracy. The government is solely responsible for ending negotiations with the Kurds. It claims that the West and the Americans drive us toward isolation, but I will disclose a secret: After my return from Baghdad, I contacted several officials of the U.S. State Departments and the British and French Foreign ministries. They all encouraged us to negotiate with the Iraqi Government, contrary to what this government claims.

[Qusaybati] What about the current position of the West and the Americans?

[Talabani] The new U.S. Administration's position is more advanced than that of the previous one. It agrees with the ideas of the unified Iraqi National Congress [INC]. In his letters to [the U.S.] Congress, President Bill Clinton always mentions the INC as a representative of the opposition and a future democratic alternative in Iraq. The INC objects to negotiations between the Kurds and Saddam, and the West does not trust Saddam. Therefore, it does not encourage such negotiations.

[Qusaybati] Don't you expect Western protection of Iraqi Kurds to end one day?

[Talabani] We have been fighting in the mountains of Kurdistan since September 1961. Then, we had no aerial or land protection from neighbors or from the West. We believe international protection will end one day. The Kurdish people must be prepared for that day. They must prepare their forces and masses and must mobilize their economic and political potential. Only then can the opposition take a unified position on Iraqi rule. A fateful alliance will be struck among the south, north, and center of Iraq. Each part will rise to defend the others if they are subjected to aggression.

We are convinced that international protection cannot last and that we cannot rely on it indefinitely. We must rely on our own resources. Later, we should seek to strengthen these resources through regional and international aid and support.

[Qusaybati] You recently expected the sanctions against Iraq to be lifted. Will this affect your future relations with Baghdad?

[Talabani] While our Iraqi people are suffering a great deal as a result of the blockade, the Saddam clique can get all that it needs. Therefore, the blockade must be lifted, but through the implementation of Resolutions 706 and 712. The coalition states must exercise pressures and implement the two resolutions because they are in the interest of the Iraqi people, including the Kurdish people. If the sanctions are lifted without international supervision of the distribution of food, this may work in favor of Saddam's interests. It is true that the economic blockade has begun to bear fruit in terms of besieging the dictatorial regime, but it is terribly affecting the people, who are consequently witnessing an appalling ethical deterioration and unprecedented corruption. Bribery is rampant among Iraqi state employees. Therefore, our society has become ill. How will we treat it, even if we get rid of Saddam? Our Iraqi people, especially those with low income, are impoverished. This also applies to Kurdistan, although our situation is much better than that in the southern and central areas. I know there are thousands of employees and teachers who began to sell the inner doors of their homes. This is a situation that cannot but arouse the sentiments of Iraqi patriotism.

We emphasize the implementation of Resolutions 707 and 712. The people must find another way to topple the regime. The matter should not be confined to the economic blockade, but should extend to political struggle and cooperation between forces from inside the Army and the people. A popular uprising must be supported by military units and a military uprising must be supported by a popular uprising. There are many ways. It is impermissible for the people to commit suicide in order to get rid of one person.

[Qusaybati] But Baghdad insists on lifting the oil embargo completely.

[Talabani] I rule out lifting the embargo in the way Saddam dreams of. This is because the West, particularly the United States and Britain, would not approve of this without preconditions. A second reason is that the [Iraqi] Government does not encourage the world to help it. It refrains from implementing international resolutions honestly and resorts to trickery. From the very beginning, the government could have rejected all these conditions. It, however, accepted everything in order to remain in power.

[Qusaybati] In your opinion, what is the way to end the Iraqis' suffering?

[Talabani] The only way out is to dispose of the dictatorship and establish a democratic regime. With regard to the Kurdish region, there are temporary solutions. We have begun to revive agriculture and reconstruct the villages. The agricultural crops were good last year. Some of them were sold abroad. We began work to build a mobile oil refinery in order to end the fuel shortage from which we suffer a great deal.

Trade is another issue showing that the Iraqi Government is the party that wishes to detach Kurdistan. We want trade dealings with the government, which is in the government's interest. For example, we have a surplus of vegetables and fruit that we can send to Baghdad. We did not ban this dealing. It was the government that planned to strangle our economy but failed to do so. Except for oil, everything is cheaper in the Kurdish region than it is in Baghdad.

When the Iraqi Government canceled the 25-dinar banknotes, it inflicted on our region approximately 500 million dinars in losses. This prompted us to consider issuing our own currency.

Baghdad is pushing us to take somewhat independent positions. It wants to intimidate Turkey and Iran, both of which greatly fear our independence. Baghdad tries to prompt Turkey and Iran to cooperate with it against us, whether by encouraging Turkey to pressure the West or through Iraqi-Turkish-Iranian cooperation against us, similar to the old policies.

There is now an Iraqi attempt to cancel the five-dinar and 10-dinar banknotes. If this happens, we have studies about opening a bank and issuing an Iraqi Kurdish dinar. In place of Saddam's picture, we would simply put the picture of a mountain, for example. We, however, will not consider full economic estrangement from Baghdad, because adherence to the dinar will safeguard the unity of the joint Iraqi Kurdish-Arab economy, and will also confirm our concern for the federation and for remaining part of the single Iraqi entity.

[Qusaybati] No one knows how leaflets, signed by the INC, were dropped from the air over areas in southern Iraq. These leaflets once again incited the overthrow of the regime.

[Talabani] I learned from Dr. Ahmad al-Jalabi, head of the INC Executive Council, that unidentified aircraft dropped these leaflets over al-Basrah and southern Iraq. I believe that these were (Western) alliance aircraft.

[Qusaybati] Were the leaflets dropped without your knowledge?

[Talabani] Yes. I was not consulted in advance.

[Qusaybati] Do you believe a resort to force is still an option for the opposition, in order to topple the regime? Do you advocate this option with Western support?

[Talabani] There are many ways: First, a new popular uprising in central, southern, and northern Iraq, supported by military units. Any uprising will not succeed if it is not supported by military units or if the army is neutralized. Second, coordination among some opposition circles and the opponents inside both the army and the ruling party. A third possibility is a rebellion by some large cities such as Mosul, as a basis for liberating other Kurdish areas. Another possibility is a military coup supported by the people. However, I do not favor this way, nor do I favor full reliance on the West. It is the Iraqis' task to topple the regime, and they should draw regional and international sympathy. Reliance on the West as a decisive solution would be a mistake. We cannot expect the West to come to Iraq again after President George Bush wasted a historic opportunity when the alliance forces were in al- Nasiriyah. In contrast, any change made by others would be to their advantage and not to the Iraqi people's advantage. I urge the opposition abroad to move and to work inside Iraq, form cells, and contact the free officers instead of staying in London.

[Qusaybati] What about U.S. financial aid to the INC? Have you received any fresh promises from Clinton's administration?

[Talabani] When I visited the United States, I inquired about the alleged aid to the opposition. We are a political party in the opposition. We learned that $42 million was allocated for the opposition. If I had been given that amount of money, I would have formed an army to liberate Iraq. I do not know how this money is being spent. We know nothing about specific U.S. aid. We would like to know if any side is extending aid to the opposition. We were told in Washington that leaflets and pamphlets against Saddam's regime have been printed.

[Qusaybati] Syria hosts the national current, and it reiterates its readiness to support and unify the Iraqi opposition. How do you view these efforts?

[Talabani] We maintain a special relationship with Syria, from which the PUK was launched. Syria's assistance enabled our party to achieve much. I would not exaggerate if I say that our presence in the house of 'Izzat Ibrahim al-Duri in the liberated city of Irbil bears Syria's fingerprints. Syria has always stood beside us, and it has not changed its position since the beginning of President Hafiz al-Asad's era. The opposition took haven in Syria, which has never strongly pressed us for taking a certain stand, despite the sensitive nature of the Kurdish issue. We had an office in Syria publishing articles and books which totally conflicted with its positions.

I visited Damascus last summer, and I spent much time there trying with the Syrian brothers to work out a formula to unify the Iraqi opposition, but to no avail. However, I am going to Damascus soon to renew the endeavor.

[Qusaybati] Is Talabani's relationship with the Turkish Government tense because he is accused of supporting the Kurdish Workers' Party [PKK]?

[Talabani] We do not support the PKK. Turkey and some circles in Turkey accuse us unjustly. We are protecting the border. We prevent infiltrations from Iraqi Kurdistan to Turkish territory, but Turkey does not prevent infiltration from its territory to Iraqi Kurdistan. My position on the dispute with the PKK is very clear. I believe the best solution in Turkey lies in its territorial integrity—a democratic solution based on recognition and nonviolation of human rights.

In Turkey and Iran, there is no respect for human rights, as confirmed by a U.S. State Department report and by the Turkish parliament. They accuse us of helping the PKK and of lacking the desire to fight it. Of course, we disagreed and even clashed with the PKK. We were even accused of fighting it for Turkey. In fact, some of its old

policies like occupying embassies and using force damaged the Kurdish issue. But this does not that we have to carry arms to fight the PKK. We have repeatedly announced that we are against all forms of terrorism, state terrorism and group-sponsored terrorism.

[Qusaybuti] Do you approve Ankara's use of the word terrorism to describe the PKK?

[Talabani] This is just a Turkish description. I consider the PKK to be a Kurdish national party, despite its radical leftist trend.

[Qusaybuti] Do you have any solution to the presence of some of its elements in your region?

[Talabani] The solution lies in its compliance with its agreement with the regional government in Iraq's Kurdistan, which gives it freedom to conduct political activity in this region without allowing it to take weapons to Turkey to fight its forces. Our government wants to maintain good neighborly relations. It cannot allow anyone to use its territory to carry out military operations against Turkey and Iran.

Since the end of the Kurdish infighting in the north, no infiltration into Turkey has occurred in 10 months, as admitted by the Turkish authorities. Ankara claimed that four infiltration incidents took place in two months. If this is true, we can say that infiltrators were combat groups that fled Turkey and then returned to it. I assert that there are no PKK camps along the Iraqi-Turkish border.

During our recent meeting with the Turkish police in Silubi [name as published], we agreed that we will protect our border and that the Turks will protect theirs. They did not blame us at all but we blamed them for failing to fulfill the promises they made last year. They promised, for example, to help us build Kurdish border villages, open roads and crossing points, and extend humanitarian aid to residents of the border region, but they did not fulfill their promises.

[Qusaybuti] The Iraqi Kurdistan Front said Iran has closed its border with northern Iraq a few days ago, and that Iraqi Kurdish villages have been the target of Iranian shelling.

[Talabani] Iran's objective is to pressure the Kurdish government, starve our people in winter, and force us to adopt hardened stands against the opposition Iranian Kurds stationed in Iraq's Kurdistan. The Islamic Republic asked us to adopt a position similar to that taken vis-a-vis Turkey. We agreed and asked the Iranian Kurds to move out of the border area. They obeyed and moved their headquarters to areas in northern Iraq. For example, the headquarters of the Kurdish Democratic Party of Iran moved to Kou Senjaq, which is a one-hour drive from Irbil. The Iranians then asked us to arrest the opposition and hand them over to them. We, of course, rejected this, because this is a violation of human rights. They then asked us to disarm them. We affirmed our readiness to apply to them what is being applied to the PKK members who carry light weapons for self-protection. The Iranian opposition cannot stay disarmed in such an area, particularly since Iran is pursuing them, killing them, and sending them booby-trapped cars and hit squads.

The other issue is that Tehran, which is under international pressure after opening its central border with the Iraqi Government, is closing its border in our area in order to hide this. We do not hide the fact that there is tension in our relations with the Islamic Republic and that we seek good relations. The Iranian Government, however, does not want friendship, but agents. We are not ready to become agents to serve the policies of others. This is the core of the problem with the Islamic Republic, which has offices here for the Red Crescent and other societies. These offices, however, are centers for the Revolutionary Guard and for unarmed Iranian intelligence elements.

[Qusaybuti] Four were killed and scores were wounded when Kurdish protesters were shot at in al-Sulaymaniyah on Monday. And two days ago in Irbil, you talked about the assassination of Kurdish party and government officials. Are these signs of security confusion in areas under Kurdish administration?

[Talabani] The security situation is improving. In an area like Kurdistan, where the society is democratic and open to "endeavors" by the Iraqi, Turkish, and Iranian Governments, there are possibilities of violations of law and crimes. Moreover, differences among Kurdish parties are sometimes solved by weapons instead of dialogue.

Some time ago, divisions occurred within the Unity Party. Two wings from this party joined the Kurdish Democratic Party [KDP], then one of them split. Three days ago, the leader of this wing, called the Kurdish Socialist Party [KSP], disarmed members of a peshmerga regiment which was affiliated with him.

The KDP decided to personally deal with the situation. It gathered its forces and a clash occurred. We asked all parties to avoid internecine fighting. However, the KDP occupied two headquarters for the KSP and a violent clash occurred over a third headquarter. The governor intervened, but the fighting was renewed. Tens of thousands of people in al-Sulaymaniyah protested, demanding the end of bloodshed and infighting among the brothers. Some reckless individuals fired at the protesters. As a result of PUK mediation, an agreement was reached to release hostages from the KSP and return their headquarters.

The issue of assassinations is no longer a secret. Amnesty International sent out a representative to investigate the matter. We condemn the assassinations that target various political figures. There were violations and attacks against members of the PUK in Irbil. A member of the PUK, which we believe is a prime target, was killed yesterday. Figures from every party, except the KDP, were killed. This fact raises questions and is considered

a serious phenomenon. We are determined to end this phenomenon as well as the carrying of arms so we can occupy ourselves next year with development affairs, municipal elections, the improvement of civil services, and the reinforcement of our democratic experiment.

Islamic Group Attacks Patrol in al-Basrah

NC2012161393 (Clandestine) Voice of Iraqi Islamic Revolution in Arabic 1430 GMT 20 Dec 93

[Text] In retaliation for the intelligence agencies' outright violations of human rights and their repressive measures in al-Basrah Governorate, a heroic Islamic resistance group laid an ambush for an intelligence agency patrol on the road between al-Diyar and al-Nashwah in al-Basrah Governorate. The group attacked the patrol, killed its members, and destroyed a Toyota Landcruiser vehicle that was transporting them. Our group seized a quantity of ammunition, three Kalashnikov rifles, and two pistols, in addition to important documents.

Rebel Radio Reports Attack on Regime Forces

NC2012162293 (Clandestine) Voice of Iraqi Islamic Revolution in Arabic 1430 GMT 20 Dec 93

[Text] The Islamic resistance forces delivered a painful blow to the tyrant Saddam's concentrations and forces south of Suq al-Shuyukh District in al-Nasiriyah Governorate last week.

Our sources reported that Islamic resistance groups, supported by mortar artillery, carried out a lightning attack on units of the 19th Division's 123d Brigade. The sources said the attack resulted in the destruction of the 3d Regiment's headquarters of that brigade, setting fire to a number of its vehicles and medium- and large-caliber weapons, killing or wounding a large number of its officers and men, and capturing a considerable amount of ammunition and light weapons.

Our sources added that the attack was so severe that it confused and immobilized the tyrant's forces and forced them to flee their positions.

The regime forces command placed its troops in the marshlands on full alert, dispatched units of the Presidential Guard to the area, and ordered that large-caliber artillery be used to bombard large areas of al-Nasiriyah Governorate's marshlands, where three civilians were wounded.

Defense Minister Attends 4-Day Military Exercise

JN2012155493 Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio Network in Arabic 1500 GMT 20 Dec 93

[Text] Defense Minister Staff General 'Ali Hasan al-Majid has attended a four-day joint military operations drill carried out by our Armed Forces.

At the end of the drill, the defense minister and the heroic fighters who carried out the drill pledged to leader President Saddam Husayn to continue to execute his instructions concerning all phases of training with the aim of reinforcing our valiant Army's combat readiness. Thus, they embodied the spirit of cooperation among our land, air, and naval forces in a way that is in harmony with our valiant Army's reputation and its eternal heroic epics. They also pledged to the president to make further sacrifices. They considered this drill, with its splendid results, a gift to his excellency at the conclusion of the current training year.

Rabin to Delegation: Do Not Yield on Security

TA2112113093 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1100 GMT 21 Dec 93

[Text] Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin and Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres this morning discussed the latest state of the talks with the Palestinians. The meeting took place just before Peres left to meet senior PLO officials somewhere in France. It was reported that the Palestinian delegation will be headed by Yasir 'Abd-Rabbuh. The decision to meet again followed the unsuccessful attempt over the weekend in Oslo to break the current impasse over security arrangements in the Gaza Strip and Jericho area under Palestinian autonomy. Israel radio's political reporter says the delegation has been given an unequivocal directive not to yield on matters of security. At his meeting with the Palestinians today, Peres is being accompanied by Deputy Chief of Staff Amnon Shahaq and cabinet Minister Yosi Sarid.

One of the PLO heads in the territories told a radio interviewer this morning that despite their disagreements, Israel and the Palestinians will reach an agreement. Ziyad Abu-Zayyad said cooperation was necessary to give Israel a feeling of security without the Palestinians closing off future options.

Rabin: Territorial Concessions 'Step' to Peace

TA2012203993 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 2030 GMT 20 Dec 93

[Text] Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin said today that territorial concessions, even widespread ones, are a legitimate step on the way to a peace agreement. The prime minister noted that in exchange for peace with Egypt, we paid a huge price and returned all of the Sinai Peninsula, and this turned out to be a wise decision. Peace is worthy of far more than territorial concessions and Zionism is not merely territorial expansion, Rabin explained. The strengthening of Jewish values and attracting more immigrants from abroad are no less important than territories.

Our correspondent Tali Katzenelson reports that the prime minister was speaking at a festive dinner in honor of the visiting Danish premier.

Rabin: Security Risks Due to Economic Problems

TA2012172993 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1700 GMT 20 Dec 93

[Excerpt] Speaking to the Labor Knesset faction during a debate over the state budget, Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin said that he was taking security risks because of economic problems, noting that these risks could exact a bloody toll.

The prime minister said that the budget was not large enough to guarantee the safety of Jewish settlers in the territories, to establish a security fence in the Gaza Strip, and to pave bypass roads. Rabin asserted that as prime minister and defense minister he was prepared to take security risks which contravened the IDF's [Israel Defense Forces] positions; however, at the same time he was committed to the national order of priorities dealing with education, infrastructure, and the war against unemployment.

Our correspondent Yo'el Nir reports that the prime minister told the Labor faction members that voting against the budget proposal was tantamount to a vote of no confidence in the government. [passage omitted]

Rabin Instructs Ministers To Help Settlers

TA1612193793 Jerusalem New Channel 2 Television Network in Hebrew 1800 GMT 26 Dec 93

[Announcer-read report followed by video report by political correspondent 'Imanu'el Rosen]

[Text] We have learned that Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin has asked cabinet ministers to help settlers in the territories, mainly with infrastructure and agricultural technology. Rabin banned ministers from speaking against such investments, but this order is not being meticulously observed. Our political correspondent 'Imanu'el Rosen reports:

[Begin recording] [Rosen] Yitzhaq Rabin does not meet settlers frequently, and that is an understatement. His tour of the Qatif Bloc yesterday was a rather rare event. However, he has been more forthcoming toward them behind the scenes. He recently asked several cabinet ministers to help the settlers in the territories and meet them halfway in order to alleviate their plight during such a period of uncertainty.

One of these ministers, Agriculture Minister Ya'aqov Tzur, has been working in earnest. For example, 4 million shekels have been invested in infrastructure for water pipes in the Qatif Bloc.

[Tzur] We are committed to invest in the coming year in excess of what we invested in the past; in the Qatif Bloc, for example, we are introducing technologies to hothouses that call for less manpower.

[Construction Minister Binyamin Ben-Eli'ezer] We should not play games where the settlers are concerned. If a piece of pavement or a water pipe goes missing tomorrow in Bet El—people live there, how can I keep such things from them?

[Rosen] Tourism Minister 'Uzi Bar'am thinks otherwise.

[Bar'am] I am in favor of allocating funds to any issue that provides stronger security. On other issues, the decision should be totally local rather than general. [end recording]

Peres: 'Control of Bridges' Major Issue

BR2012155593 Paris LE MONDE in French 18 Dec 93 p 8

[Interview with Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres by Jean-Marie Colombani and Jean-Pierre Langellier, on 16 December in Paris on the occasion of the publication of his book "A Time for Peace": "Shim'on Peres: 'The Main Issue Is Control of Bridges'"; first paragraph is LE MONDE introduction]

[Text] During a visit in Paris on the occasion of the publication of his book, "A Time for Peace," Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres explained in an interview with LE MONDE, on Thursday 16 December, the reasons for the current delays in the implementation of the peace agreement signed on 13 September.

[LE MONDE] Implementation of the "Gaza-Jericho First" agreement seems to be thwarted by three major barriers: the size of the Jericho area; control of borders—especially bridges over the Jordan river; and the timetable for the release of jailed Palestinians. Which is the main one?

[Peres] The main issue is control of the bridges. Because we only have one border, not two. It is not as if there were, on the one hand, a border between the future self-governing area and Jordan and, on the other hand, a border between that area and Israel. There is only one border, and he who controls traffic over the bridges also controls the border to Israel. He has the key to Tel Aviv, since anyone crossing the bridges can then move freely anywhere in Israel.

[LE MONDE] What is Yasir 'Arafat's position?

[Peres] He thinks this is a matter of dignity. That is a big mistake. There is no honor involved, nor are we acting on a whim. This is a serious matter affecting our country's security.

[LE MONDE] The statement of principle signed on 13 September vaguely mentions a "coordination" between Israel and the Palestinians with respect to border control. Do you accept such a coordination?

[Peres] Absolutely; I have no problem with this coordination. A Palestinian presence is possible.

[LE MONDE] Which form would it take?

[Peres] I do not know right now. But the agreement provides for Israel to remain in control of external security. This is the main point.

[LE MONDE] What do you think is the reason for Yasir 'Arafat's insistence?

[Peres] I do not know. Part of it is probably tactical.

[LE MONDE] You indicated that you were surprised by the difficulties which caused the current delays. But believing that the timetable would be strictly adhered to was rather naive, was it not?

[Peres] I did believe it would be.

[LE MONDE] Can a compromise more easily be reached on the issue of the size of the Jericho area?

[Peres] On this issue, 'Arafat's requests had been set on paper. He first asked for a small part of the West Bank so that no one could accuse him of being content with just Gaza. Then he wanted a larger area, as well as control of a number of hills.

Then he indicated that he did not ask for inclusion of Jewish settlements. We were in agreement on this. And he never expressed a wish to see the area stretch as far as the Dead Sea. One needs to read again the original agreement.

[LE MONDE] But the agreement is quite vague. 'Arafat could think that he would obtain a number of things during the negotiating process.

[Peres] Well, you know, in any negotiation, the biggest problem is the very existence of the other side. If we were negotiating with ourselves, we obviously would have reached a perfect agreement long ago. This is also true for 'Arafat.... Unfortunately, it takes two sides.

Labor Leader to 'Arafat: Stick To Accord Terms

BR1712134193 Rome L'UNITA in Italian 17 Dec 93 p11

[Interview with Labor Party Deputy Ya'el Dayan by Umberto De Giovannangeli in Rome; date not given: "Yasir, My Friend, Don't Overplay Your Hand"]

[Text] "The hopes of peace that sprung up in Washington on that unforgettable 13 September have not faded, but it will take some time to eliminate every shadow of ambiguity as to the implementation of the settlement on Gaza and Jericho. It is not the dates that are sacred; the only really sacred thing is peace." "What I say to my friend Yasir 'Arafat is: There is no point in pushing beyond the commitments entered into on 13 September; what we are discussing now is autonomy for Gaza and Jericho, not the nature of the future Palestinian state." Ya'el Dayan smiles as she repeats with determination her conviction that: "There is no alternative to dialogue, and the clock of history will not be turned back by a violent minority." Ya'el Dayan, writer and Labor deputy, is in Rome as a guest of honor at the "Concert for Peace" organized by the St. Cecilia Academy. The other guest is an elderly doctor from Gaza, a man of mild manners but cast-iron convictions, a piece of the history of Palestine and the PLO, Haydar 'Abd al-Shafi: "My father (General Moshe Dayan, the 'Six-Day War' hero—L'UNITA editor's note) had dealings with him several times," says Yael. "He was an implacable enemy, but it is with people of this fiber that we now have to negotiate and build a new Middle East.

[De Giovannangeli] Three months after the agreement between Rabin and 'Arafat, the peace process seems to be at a standstill again. Is it just pausing for breath, or is something seriously wrong?

[Dayan] I would say it is the realization that the implementation of the "Declaration of Principle" initialed in Washington is more complex than it seemed on first sight, during the celebrations. This applies particularly to security along the frontiers between Gaza, Jericho, and the neighboring countries. I believe that the PLO leadership is handling the negotiations wrongly on this point.

[De Giovannangeli] How do you mean?

[Dayan] My friend Yasir is wrong to want to give an excessively "extensive" interpretation of the Washington agreement, particularly regarding control over external borders. Control over border crossings with Egypt and Jordan is a security problem for Israel, and as such it is not negotiable. If the Palestinians want to guarantee the presence of their police at the frontiers, we have no objection, but responsibility must remain with the Israeli military authorities. Look, the only way to save the negotiations from the many enemies that want to sabotage them is to stick to the agreement signed in Washington. Distorting it would be fatal.

[De Giovannangeli] Is the withdrawal of the Israeli Army from the Gaza Strip and Jericho one of these "distortions" as well?

[Dayan] The 13 September agreement refers clearly to redeployment of the Israeli forces, not total withdrawal. This means that the Israeli Army must leave all the centers inhabited by the Palestinians, but guarantee security along the borders and in the settlements as long as the latter remain. As you know, I have been fighting for ages to have the Palestinian people's right to self-determination recognized, and I believe the only possible outcome of the peace process will be the eventual constitution of a Palestinian state entity. But what we are talking about today is not the nature of that state but how to set Gaza and Jericho on the road to autonomy. This is why I want to tell 'Arafat not to overplay his hand in the negotiations too far, as the risk of breakdown is very great indeed, and then victory would go not to the legitimate aspirations of two nations but to the ambitions of those who merely want power and are prepared to shed more blood to achieve it.

[De Giovannangeli] The new explosions of violence in the occupied territories constitute one of the major obstacles on the road toward peace. The dialogue is under attack from both the Hamas fundamentalists and the Israeli settlers. How can they be brought under control?

[Dayan] The Israeli extremists can be stopped simply by applying, without hesitation, the existing laws, which guarantee freedom to express one's ideas but not to impose them by using force. Violent individuals should be curbed, whoever they are, even when they use their "Jewishness" as a shield. As far as the Hamas fundamentalists are concerned, it is up to the Palestinian police to control them. The sooner they start, the better it will be for all concerned.

Shamir: 'Agreement Will Never Become Reality'

BR1712122993 Rome LA REPUBBLICA in Italian 17 Dec 93 p18

[Interview with former Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir by Alberto Stabile in Tel Aviv; date not given: 'Crime Against Israel'"]

[Text] Tel Aviv—"The agreement with the PLO is a crime against national interests," former Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir said in his 10th-floor office in a Tel Aviv skyscraper, with no visible mementoes apart from a photograph of himself with Ronald Reagan. Then he pondered for a moment and added: "A terrible mistake. And, as you know, in politics a mistake can sometimes be worse than a crime." The last warrior of Zionism likes to describe himself as "an old statesman now verging on retirement." But nothing about him resembles the kindly granddaddy who only wants to play with his grandchildren—neither his sharp elegance, nor his expression, nor his cutting sarcasm. If anything, Shamir seems to have something about him of the old lion, dozing but watchful, with one eye open. He was born in 1915, and he is the last representative of a generation of pioneers that now belong to the past. A generation that did not hesitate even to resort to terrorism to achieve the right to found their own state. A right which Shamir denies the Palestinians.

[Stabile] What did you feel when you saw Rabin and Peres shaking hands with 'Arafat?

[Shamir] I was devastated, shocked. It was a very depressing sight. 'Arafat is one of our worst enemies. He founded the PLO with one sole aim—Israel's destruction.

[Stabile] But that is no longer his objective.

[Shamir] I do not believe that. 'Arafat has devoted his whole life to this aim. What he has always wanted is to create a Palestinian state within our own country. Now, since he cannot achieve his objective through violence, he is seeking other roads, political roads. He is trying to deceive us. But he must realize that this country belongs to us, to the people of Israel.

[Stabile] But it was you who started the peace negotiations...

[Shamir] Never with 'Arafat, never with the PLO. I always insisted on negotiating with representatives of the Palestinian people living under our laws—or, if you prefer, with representatives of the Arab populations of Judea, Samaria, and Gaza—but never with the Palestinians living outside. And I think I was right, because they were very close to destruction before this meeting on the White House lawn. If our government had not helped them, we could have seen the disintegration of the PLO.

[Stabile] Do you not consider Clinton's presence at that ceremony an adequate guarantee?

[Shamir] Not at all. Rabin asked Clinton to help him in this operation and Clinton, as a friend of Israel's, did so. But he was not convinced that this was the right path for us.

[Stabile] But he wept.

[Shamir] I did not see that.

[Stabile] Everyone could see that Clinton was moved.

[Shamir] OK, he may have felt something. Tomfoolery ("Narrischkeiten" in Yiddish—LA REPUBBLICA editor's note). For statesmen, this factor does not exist. The fact is that the Americans have regretted it, and so have the Israelis, because this accord cannot lead to any kind of peace.

[Stabile] Why are you to stubbornly opposed to the agreement?

[Shamir] Because it constitutes a serious threat to Israel. Because what 'Arafat wants, as he has stated openly, is to create a Palestinian state.

[Stabile] Is he not entitled to do so?

[Shamir] Certainly not.

[Stabile] Not even to have a dream?

[Shamir] To dream? He wants to create it, that state. That man is no dreamer, but a killer. He is not in the business of dreaming.

[Stabile] When you came here you had a dream, and in order to make it come true you did not hesitate to use the harshest methods.

[Shamir] I came here in 1935, under British rule. At that time the Jewish population were a minority, and the Arabs were the majority. Nevertheless I have always believed that we would become a majority and that this country would become a Jewish state.

[Stabile] But you did not hesitate to combat the Arab majority.

[Shamir] I mainly fought against the British who occupied our country, and I fought for a free Jewish state.

[Stabile] If you could turn the clock back, would you do the same again?

[Shamir] Undoubtedly. Indeed, I would do it better, more efficiently.

[Stabile] But the Palestinians are not entitled to fight for a state of their own.

[Shamir] This is not their country. In the Middle East there are 22 independent Arab states. If they want to have an exclusively Palestinian state, they can have it in Jordan, where the majority of the population are Palestinian and very often the prime minister or foreign minister is Palestinian. And where perhaps you could say that the only non-Palestinian is King Husayn.

[Stabile] But the Palestinians have always lived here.

[Shamir] Since when? Do you know the exact date? We have been bound to this land for thousands of years. This is our country, and they must realize it.

[Stabile] In your vision of the world, what is the Palestinians' place?

[Shamir] We have spoken about autonomy, about certain forms of self-government, since they do live here, and we want them to lead a decent life.

[Stabile] And what is the place of this agreement in the history of Israel?

[Shamir] It is a crime. It will be regarded as a crime, not only because Rabin and his government signed it, but because it represents a step taken by the Israeli Government to save the PLO. And I have not the slightest doubt that this step will be regarded in history not only as a mistake, a terrible mistake, but as a crime against our people's national interests.

[Stabile] So are Rabin and Peres criminals?

[Shamir] I did not say criminals. But from this viewpoint, they have committed a crime.

[Stabile] But most people support the agreement.

[Shamir] The majority do not support it at all. All the opinion polls show 48-46 percent. Please write this down: This agreement will never become a reality.

[Stabile] But do you not think that the Israeli people, like the Palestinian people, are tired of fighting?

[Shamir] We will never tire. Because the moment that we do will be tragic for us. Leaders must never tire. The question is: Who will be the first to tire? And I am certain that the PLO will tire first.

[Stabile] But apart from the PLO, there are such organizations as Hamas, the Jihad...

[Shamir] Nonsense. The question is not with which terrorist organisation we must negotiate. We must not reach agreements with any of these organizations. We had an agreement with Egypt, which is a country fully capable of honoring agreements. But 'Arafat is not in control of anything—not even his own followers. He promised to end terrorism, but he has not even been able to honor that pledge.

[Stabile] If the agreement does not become a reality, what do you think the solution is? An endless war?

[Shamir] What war? There can only be war between countries, and the PLO is not a country. And if we are talking about terrorism, we have that now, every day. There is nothing new.

[Stabile] During your visit to the United States you apparently said that a government led by the Likud will not honor the agreements.

[Shamir] I never said that. I only said that if the Likud returns to power, it will have its own policy line, which is not the same as this government's.

[Stabile] So you want to change the agreement with the PLO.

[Shamir] Of course. It would be absurd for a Likud government to help to create a foreign government, a Palestinian government, in our own land.

Arab State Jews Seek Role in Peace Talks

TA1712073293 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 0500 GMT 17 Dec 93

[Excerpts] Members of the World Organization of Jews from Arab Countries [WOJAC] say they want a role in Arab-Israeli peace talks. They say the Arab states should pay Israel $11.5 billion in compensation for the absorption in Israel of Jews from Arab countries. The group held its annual conference yesterday in Tel Aviv. Dani Gur-Arye reports:

[Begin Gur-Arye recording] Members of WOJAC say it's time to include them in the Middle East peace process. The group says the 800,000 Jews who fled Arab countries 45 years ago have old claims to settle. They say they have a right for compensation from the Arab states. The chairman of the group's presidium, Leon Tamman, says the Jews who left Arab countries around the time Israel was created have the status of refugees. He said it would be natural for members of his group to participate in the multilateral peace talks on refugees. [passage omitted]

Tamman says the value of the property left behind by Jews in Arab countries, combined with the cost of their absorption in Israel, totals over $11.5 billion. He says Israel has the right to demand that sum from the Arab states.

Tamman is a Geneva-based businessman with ties to leaders in the Arab world. He says he contributed to the peace talks with Egypt by meeting several times with Anwar al-Sadat. Tamman says he could do the same with leaders of the Arab states. [end recording]

Council of Settlements Begins Fund Raising

TA2012061193 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 0500 GMT 20 Dec 93

[Text] The Council of Jewish Communities in Judaea, Samaria, and Gaza, and the Bney 'Aqiva Youth Movement have launched a fund raising campaign for Jewish communities in the territories. Hundreds of youths have been canvassing the country, asking people to donate to the Eretz Yisra'el Fund, which is managed by the Council of Jewish Settlements. A spokesman for the organization says tens of thousands of shekels have been collected so far.

A large scale fund-raising campaign is due to be launched soon in the United States. It will last 10 days, and Knesset Member Ari'el Sharon will take part.

U.S. Jews Buying Apartments in East Jerusalem

TA2012201293 Jerusalem New Channel 2 Television Network in Hebrew 1800 GMT 20 Dec 93

[Rina Matzliah video report]

[Excerpts] Over the past several months, Jewish voluntary societies have secretly purchased dozens of apartments in East Jerusalem. The funds, estimated at millions of dollars, are coming from American Jews. Our correspondent Rina Matzliah is here with the first details of the campaign to purchase apartments currently under way in East Jerusalem.

Two, as yet uninhabited house were recently purchased here in East Jerusalem's Sawwanah neighborhood, near the home of Faysal al-Husayni. The Rabin government fought to halt the purchasing of apartments from public funds, but this recent wave of purchases is perfectly legal and cannot be stopped. [passage omitted]

The settling of East Jerusalem is not a top priority, the mayor says. Nevertheless, there is no reason to prevent it.

[Begin Jerusalem Mayor Ehud Olmert recording] Why should I intervene if an American Jew wants to use his honestly earned dollars to buy property in the Old City's Muslim Quarter? This is a private matter. [end recording]

Approximately five voluntary societies are active in purchasing the apartments. However, finding tenants for all these apartments is taking time. [passage omitted]

The occupancy of all these apartments is undoubtedly linked to future political developments. Meanwhile, those eager to settle East Jerusalem draw encouragement from the new major. Even if he does not actually help them, he will certainly not stand in their way.

Israel, U.S. Said Monitoring DPRK Shipments

TA2012180293 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1700 GMT 20 Dec 93

[Text] Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres says that Israel and the United States are meticulously and constantly monitoring arms shipments, especially Scud-C missiles, from North Korea [DPRK] to Syria. Our correspondent Hayim Hecht reports that replying to queries in the Knesset plenum, Peres said that the issue came up during Secretary of State Christopher's recent visit to the Middle East, and Israel and the United States were investigating ways to prevent the shipment of North Korean missiles to the region. The foreign minister

added that in addition to diplomatic efforts, what he called technical means would be put into use in the near future, in order to monitor the shipment of North Korean missiles to the region.

Intelligence Chief on Arab Military Procurement

TA2012122793 Tel Aviv DAVAR in Hebrew 20 Dec 93 p 3

[ITIM report]

[Text] Brigadier General A., the Air Force intelligence chief, estimates that Iraq still has missiles, and possibly a limited number of launchers, it has managed to cache. Brig. Gen. A. made these remarks in an interview published in yesterday's issue of BIT'ON HEYL HA'AVIR:

He further opines that within a year, Iran will be able to launch long-range missiles, such as Korean-made Nodong, which will in future be able to carry chemical and nuclear warheads. He is in no doubt that Iran will strive to nuclear capability, as it has invested considerable efforts toward that goal.

The chief asserts that Syria and Iran will probably possess an infrastructure that will enable them to independently manufacture Scud-C missiles within a year. He says Syria does not have SA-11 missiles as yet, and as far as is known, neither does it have SA-10 missiles—Syria's top priority. "The peace process has put Syria's military procurement in abeyance to a certain extent, as it now feels there is sufficient time for that."

Iran poses an immediate threat to its neighbors—Iraq and Saudi Arabia—but not Israel, although it also lies within Iranian missile range. "Iran is not buying tanks to fight us, and most of its aircraft are incapable of reaching Israeli territory. Most of their surface-to-surface missiles are not directed at us and are incapable of reaching such distant targets, but we know that Iran is pursuing the development of long-range aircraft and missiles so as to be able to directly threaten Israel," he said.

Syria's main purchase since the Gulf War were the North Korean surface-to-surface missiles and the Czech and Russian T-72 tanks. Syria has augmented its capability in the field of surface-to-surface missiles since the Gulf war. Because of the "there is time" feeling, Syria is not in a hurry to purchase expensive weapon systems, such as the SA-10 or new combat aircraft. This may stem from the reluctance to be logistically dependent on Russia. This problem has already caused Syrian Air Force to cut down on flight hours.

Egypt has built an excellent air force in recent years. It has purchased American aircraft and equipment and carried out joint exercises with the Americans, who have greatly contributed to the higher standard of the Egyptian Air Force. Saudi Arabia tops the list of the region's procuring countries, having purchased F-15S aircraft, Apache helicopters, as well as Patriot batteries. Kuwait is also buying military equipment. Iraq and Libya are subject to sanctions and trade restrictions, while Jordan lacks the necessary resources to purchase new weapon systems.

Army Blocks Settlers Procession; 40 Arrested

TA1712054093 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 0500 GMT 17 Dec 93

[Text] Soldiers and settlers scuffled at Tapuah junction last night after troops prevented them from bringing a Torah scroll to the religious seminary at Joseph's Tomb on the outskirts of Nabulus. Forty were arrested and face charges of disturbing the peace and illegal assembly. Hundred of Jewish residents had gathered at the junction to celebrate the completion of the writing of the Torah scroll. The Army blocked the settlers from reaching Nabulus and declared the Ramallah and Nabulus areas a closed military zone.

The settlers had confronted soldiers earlier this week in their first attempt to install the Torah scroll at Joseph's Tomb. A compromise was reached to put it off until last night. The Army spokesman said the head of Central Command, Major General Nehemya Tamari, had decided not to allow the ceremony and procession because of security concerns.

The Army has now proposed a new tentative date for the ceremony: Tuesday [28 December], two weeks from now. Organizers of the effort to bring the scroll to the yeshiva say they will launch another attempt on Sunday.

Border Police To Replace IDF Troops in Hebron

TA1912140293 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 19 Dec 93 p A1

[Report by Eytan Rabin and Yerah Tal]

[Excerpt] The IDF [Israel Defense Forces] has recently decided to establish a regional Border Police command in Hebron. The decision has the approval of Chief of Staff Ehud Baraq, Police Commissioner Rafi Peled, Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin, and Police Minister Moshe Shahal.

A senior Army source announced that the decision to set up a Border Police command in Hebron came in the wake of requests by Central Command Commander Nehemya Tamari and Brigadier General Sha'ul Mufaz, the IDF commander in the West Bank. Discussions on the establishment of the command were also attended by Border Police Commander Yitzhaq Aharonovich.

According to the plan, Hebron Border Police troops will deal with disturbances both by Palestinians and settlers as soon as the command is established. Border Police troops in the territories have more extensive powers than IDF soldiers, and being policemen, they may detain settlers. In addition, the Border Police troops will guard the city's traffic axes. IDF sources have stated that as soon as Border Police troops enter Hebron, the IDF will

thin out its deployment and redirect the freed troops to other activities, including training.

Army sources further said that the Border Police troops are better qualified to deal with disturbances staged by Palestinians, and in view of the current situation in Hebron, they will receive special instructions on how to deal with settlers.

Hebron is the only Palestinian city in the territories inhabited by settlers. In recent weeks, there have been numerous incidents between Palestinian and Jewish inhabitants of the city. In one, a Palestinian was killed as soldiers helplessly watched settlers rioting.

IDF elements said last night that to avoid a situation in which IDF soldiers are forced to deal with settlers and to allow them to focus on terrorism, it would be far better to send the Border Police into these places.

The Gaza Strip Border Police deployment has been also reinforced, and several dozens activists, including wanted men, have been captured in operations initiated by the Border Police over the past few weeks. [passage omitted]

Police Chief Foresees Problems in Green Line Area

TA1712173993 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1700 GMT 17 Dec 93

[Text] Police Commissioner Rafi Peled says that if the Palestinian police prove to lack the power to enforce the law on the opponents of the peace agreement in the territories, Israel will have to do it, and that will invalidate the basis of the entire arrangement. He anticipates difficulties in the area straddling the Green Line, where he expects criminal and terrorist activities to take place after the implementation of the agreement, requiring immediate Israeli solutions.

Appearing before the Commercial and Industrial Club in Tel Aviv, Commissioner Peled said 185 right-wing demonstrations were held throughout the country last week, and 176 persons suspected of disturbing the peace were detained. This was reported by our correspondent Shim'on Vilna'i.

[A related report on Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew at 1600 GMT on 17 December cited Commissioner Peled as saying that "the police have solved five out of the six attacks recently carried out by Israelis against Arab residents of the territories."

[Peled added that "the arrest last night of six Jerusalem residents, including Kakh members, has foiled the establishment of a new group. When arrested, they had diverse warfare means in their possession, and they had planned to carry out various illegal acts. Commissioner Peled further said that the evidence amassed so far in the murder of three Arab residents of Tarqumiyah did not enable the police to detain suspects, but he was certain that the persons responsible for this grave deed would be captured."]

Cabinet Views Legality of Rabbi's Call to IDF

TA1912115693 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1100 GMT 19 Dec 93

[Text] Justice Minister David Liba'i is studying this morning's remarks by former Chief Rabbi Shlomo Goren in order to decide whether legal proceedings should be brought against him. Rabbi Goren called on IDF [Israel Defense Forces] soldiers to refuse orders to uproot settlements in the territories because that would contravene halakah and since the government's majority depends on Arabs its resolutions on Eretz Yisra'el are invalid. At today's cabinet meeting, ministers sharply attacked Rabbi's Goren's remarks, charging him with sedition and harming Israel's democratic character. Minister 'Uzi Bar'am called on the attorney general to investigate the matter. Minister Binyamin Ben-Eli'ezer also believes the legal authorities should look into the former chief rabbi's remarks.

Our political correspondent Shlomo Raz reports that Prime Minister Rabin gave the ministers an overall report on the Oslo talks. All the ministers expressed support for Mr. Rabin's stand that Israel must remain responsible for external security during the interim settlement.

Palestinian-Israeli Business Forum Established

TA2012145493 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 20 Dec 93 p C2

[Report by Zohar Blumenkrantz]

[Excerpts] A permanent forum of prominent Palestinian and Israeli businessmen was established at the conclusion of an economic conference held under a cloak of secrecy in Oxford, England, at the beginning of December.

HA'ARETZ has learned that the forum will be headed by Juwayd al-Ghusayn, a PLO Executive Committee member, who is considered the organization's finance minister, and Jewish-Israeli businessman Jacques Nasser, who owns business affiliations in the Far East and the United States.

The conference was organized by the Israel-Palestine Center for Research and Information. Conference participants, for whom this report is their first exposure, were two Palestinian representatives appointed by PLO Chairman Yasir 'Arafat, Juwayd al-Ghusayn, and Dr. Anis al-Qasim, the PLO Legal Committee chairman who is in charge of drafting the Palestinian legislation under autonomy. Another participant was one of the most prominent businessmen in Jordan, a Palestinian who wished to remain anonymous, as well as Dr. Samir 'Abdallah, the Palestinian liaison with the World Bank.

The Israeli side was represented by Mozi Wertheim, Mickey Strauss, Beni Ga'on, Yosi Rosen, Dani Gillerman, Dr. Gil Feiler, Moshe 'Amirav, and two Israeli Arab businessmen, Ibrahim Bulus and Ihsan Qadmani. [passage omitted]

The conference concluded with a resolution that an actual business convention, at which business deals would be clinched, would be held in The Hague, Netherlands, in late May 1994. [passage omitted]

Turkey Asks for Aid To End Syrian 'Terrorism'

TA1912121693 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 19 Dec 93 p A4

[Report by political correspondent Aluf Ben]

[Excerpt] Turkey has asked that, during negotiations with Syria, Israel demand Damascus stop assisting all kinds of terrorism and close offices of the terror organizations operating within Syria—as a precondition for signing a peace agreement. This request was raised in discussions Turkish Foreign Minister Hikmet Cetin held in Israel last month.

A similar request for pressure on Syria was raised in Washington by Turkish Prime Minister Tansu Ciller during her visit there in October. Ciller told the heads of the U.S. Administration that Turkey shares a border with three of the eight countries on the list of terror-supporting countries: Iran, Iraq, and Syria.

Next month, President 'Ezer Weizman will travel to Turkey on a first state visit by an Israeli leader there. He will hold meetings with the heads of the Turkish administration. The visit symbolizes the tightening relations between the two countries, which have recently enjoyed unprecedented expansion and openness. [passage omitted]

Dissipation of Nuclear Secrecy Seen 'Imperative'

TA1712170593 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 17 Dec 93 p B1

[Commentary by Dan Margalit: "Dissipating the Dimness"]

[Excerpts] Nearly 40 years after David Ben-Gurion, Shim'on Peres, David Ernst Bergman, and many nameless men covertly invested expertise, funds, and energy in the nuclear reactor in Dimona, there hardly remains anyone still doubting its strategic lucrativeness. There remains only the ponderable political dilemma of realizing the profits in the international and Middle East arenas.

The argument with the Committee for the Nuclear Disarmament of the Middle East—featuring such formidable figures as Efrayim Orbach, Eli'ezer Livne, and Yesha'yahu Leibowitz—which started in the 1950's and was conducted in a dim light, is over. These days the opponents of the nuclear option populate various fringe groups which hang on to Mordekhay Vanunu's treason and his personal fate. [passage omitted]

Israel is now forced to address the issue on two main levels: on the one hand, President Bill Clinton's initiative seeking to establish global nuclear control systems, which has encountered annoying difficulties in the form of the rejectionist attitude of North Korea and now, possibly, Russia and the Ukraine as well; and on the other hand, the anticipated developments in the Middle East negotiations—notably those with Syria—which force Israel to choose between the alternative of benefiting from the current dimness and that of placing the issue on the agenda. A temptation alongside with a threat.

Yitzhaq Rabin and Peres seem to welcome Clinton's initiative, which aims to prevent the processing of plutonium for nuclear bombs and to preserve the existing situation. Thus, even if Israel is forced to cease manufacturing that which it has been amassing in such large quantities (in the CIA's opinion), its potential will still remain exclusive in the Middle East.

The dilemma is whether to hold a dialogue with the United States and the Arabs under the umbrella of the understanding the Clinton administration has shown for Israel's needs in this sphere—as expressed even in recent remarks of a senior Pentagon figure—or to continue protecting what is left of the secret.

True, the dim light in which the discussion has been enveloped for decades had its advantages, but the dimness is dissipating. [passage omitted]

In fact, the remaining dim light is the only factor preventing any reference to the dramatic option sensed by those who are conversant with the political negotiations. They believe Israel now has a unique opportunity to join the international nuclear club through the main door. Whatever the United States has been denying Israel because of its reluctance to sign the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, will be denied no longer. If the existing status is taken stock of and frozen, not only will Israel gain a nuclear edge in the region, its current status will gain recognition.

This view has received a qualified endorsement in the stands of senior U.S. diplomats, who doubt Israel's ability to obtain Arab consent to it. The most senior of these diplomats has noted that in exchange for total withdrawal from all the territories and the establishment of a Palestinian state, the Arab cordon surrounding Israel, with Syria at its center, may tacitly consent to Israel's retaining its monopoly on the nuclear option in the Middle East for a period of 10 or 20 years.

Are the advantages inherent in the U.S. recognition and the Arabs' turning of a blind eye worth joining Clinton's control initiative? Would that constitute a step toward

the realization of the nuclear deterrence policy recommended by Feldman [author of a book advocating publicity of nuclear efforts as a deterrent measure]? In view of the options, a further dissipation of the traditional dimness seems imperative.

Unless such a step is made, the strategic discussion of Israel's standing will be frittered away, and the major opportunity to join the global nuclear club with American-Arab recognition will dwindle to mere haggling over another fence in Gaza and yet another army unit in Jericho.

U.S. Said 'Itching' To Mediate in Peace Talks

TA1712141893 Tel Aviv 'AL HAMISHMAR in Hebrew 17 Dec 93 p 13

[Commentary by Washington correspondent: "Hooked on Mediation"]

[Text] Even if Israel were to follow in the PLO's footsteps and ask the United States to act as a mediator in the talks on the implementation of the Gaza-Jericho agreement, the U.S. Administration would not readily take up the gauntlet. Bill Clinton has no reason to embark on such a foreign adventure only a few days after the shock of Secretary of Defense Les Aspin's resignation.

Aspin's resignation once again illustrated to the U.S. public the foreign policy failures of the Clinton administration, and Secretary of State Warren Christopher would hardly be eager to embark on a complex mediation effort between Israel and the Palestinians whose chances of succeeding under the present circumstances are unclear. After all, Aspin needed only one failure, Somalia, to end his career at the service of the administration.

The U.S. Administration's official reaction to the crisis in the talks between Israel and the PLO amply reflected the dilemma the United States is facing. It unquestionably showed that Washington has no intention of getting involved in the talks between Rabin and 'Arafat. However, in the same breath, it voiced concern about the future of the process and stressed the importance of an immediate implementation of the declaration of principles. The Americans are itching to mediate but caution requires that they stay out of the picture and let Israel and the PLO settle their affairs.

However, a country like the United States cannot possibly let the Middle East peace process pass it by without some kind of active mediation. Even if the Israeli-Palestinian track is lost from Washington's point of view, it still has the Syrian option. The administration now perceives its role as advancing the talks between Israel and Syria, and as the exclusive mediator on this track. If and when Jerusalem and Damascus attain an agreement, Clinton and Christopher will not just be the hosts lending the use of the South Lawn but will be bona fide partners.

The first move to budge the Syrian cart will come in the meeting between Bill Clinton and Hafiz al-Asad in mid-January in Geneva. The Americans pin great hopes on this meeting, and expect it to become the key to a breakthrough on the Syrian channel. The very fact of such a meeting constitutes a U.S. gesture toward Syria. Consquently, it will be Syria's turn to reciprocate the gesture to Clinton. What the Syrian gesture should look like is already clear to the U.S. Administration: A position paper signed by the Syrian president in which he officially and authoritatively explains, once and for all, the way in which Syria perceives a future peace with Israel. In other words, a explanation of the "essence of peace."

The Syrians have tried all possible vague formulations on the subject, but only an authoritative and written explanation will put an end to the issue and assure Israel that Syria is talking about full peace, open borders, and diplomatic relations. Then, Bill Clinton will fly back from Geneva to Washington with al-Asad's written explanation tucked in his pocket, phone Yitzhaq Rabin, and tell him: "It is time to do business." If al-Asad indeed explains the essence of peace to Clinton, Israel will no longer be able to use this excuse to stall the talks and will have no choice other than to start talking about the Golan Heights in terms of kilometers and target dates.

The administration's scenario is still far from materializing, but the United States has been going to great lengths not to let its past mistakes recur and let go of this track of the talks. After Clinton returns from Europe, the administration is expected to summon the heads of the Israeli and Arab delegations to Washington for preparatory talks. The invitations, mediation, and control—all will be in American hands.

The administration's preparatory talks are supposed to reflect the results of the Clinton-al-Asad meeting. If agreement is reached, these preparatory talks will be used to launch an intensive U.S. mediation effort, and if nothing budges the Americans will still be able to invite the sides to yet another sterile round of talks in Washington at the end of January. What is most important from the Clinton administration's point of view is to maintain a presence in the Israeli-Syrian track and not to take its eyes off al-Asad and Rabin, even for one second. This is one agreement Clinton cannot afford to miss.

Iraqi Sources: Imports Via al-'Aqabah Continue

JN2112100393 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 21 Dec 93 pp pp 1, 24

[Text] Al-'Aqabah—AL-DUSTUR has learned that the flow of Iraqi imports via the port of al-'Aqabah is continuing, and that three ships laden with foodstuffs will arrive at the port within the next two weeks.

Referring to the memorandum requesting the commercial sector in Iraq to use Iraqi ports, Iraqi sources affirmed that it is natural that the Iraqi port of Umm Qasr be reactivated. The sources noted, however, that the port of Umm Qasr receives ships with limited cargo capacity. Therefore, they said, the port of al-'Aqabah will continue to receive ships with a cargo capacity that is too big for the Iraqi ports to handle. The sources added that cargo movement to Iraq via the port of al-'Aqabah is strategic. This movement is neither temporary nor subject to any internal decisions, the sources affirmed.

Sources from the Jordanian Ports Authority affirmed that the special facilities and privileges provided for the brother Iraqi merchants and for the commodities imported to Iraq in al-'Aqabah are indispensable and cannot be found at other ports. The sources explained that these privileges cover fees, jetties, and the space provided for the loading and unloading of Iraqi goods

The sources indicated that the port of al-'Aqabah is expected to witness positive developments accompanying the Middle East peace process. They said that demand for the transportation of goods via al-'Aqabah will increase in the near future and after the blockade imposed on fraternal Iraq is lifted. However, the sources indicated, the continued sea inspection and the hindering of ships by the coalition forces at the entrance of the Gulf of Aqaba have a negative impact on these expectations.

Minister of State Assesses U.S., PLO Relations

JN1712195393 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1756 GMT 17 Dec 93

[Telephone interview with Talal Sat'an al-Hasan, minister of state for foreign affairs, in Amman by Salim Badawi in the studio; from the weekly "The Event" program; date not given—recorded]

[Text] [Badawi] Your Excellency the Minister: How do you assess Warren Christopher's recent talks in Amman and the recent Jordanian stands in light of this visit?

[Al-Hasan] Here I must shed light on the first topic of discussion between His Majesty King Husayn and the U.S. secretary of state during his recent tour of Amman and the region: bilateral relations. I can characterize these relations as good, especially after the recent official trip of His Majesty King Husayn to Washington. King Husayn felt the warm relationship and the good reception he had on all official levels. Of course, they discussed bilateral relations and ways of enhancing them in all fields. His majesty the king stressed Jordan's commitment to the peace process in its bilateral and multilateral aspects. They also discussed ways to support the peace process. Secretary Christopher said the United States is committed to advancing the peace process and places the Arab-Israeli dispute at the top of its priority list in the region. Naturally, there was a discussion about how to advance the Israeli-Palestinian agreement, signed in Washington on 13 September. Jordan has supported this agreement, in the hope that it will be a first step toward achieving a just, comprehensive, and lasting peace in the region and toward achieving progress on the other tracks—the Jordanian, Syrian, and Lebanese. Jordan also hopes for further progress on the Palestinian-Israeli track, since it is the core of this dispute.

[Badawi] Your Excellency the Minister: The Palestinian-Israeli track is now somewhat faltering. How does Jordan view the next stage if this situation persists, especially since the implementation of the Gaza-Jericho agreement has been delayed?

[Al-Hasan] Jordan has supported the agreement since its announcement. This was regarded as an independent Palestinian decision. Needless to say, Jordan's policy has not been seasonal, but principled. We viewed what happened as a breakthrough. We still support the Palestinian brothers. When the Jordanian umbrella was provided in Madrid, it was meant to enable the brothers to reach a situation where they can move freely. We hope all obstacles to this agreement will be overcome. Crown Prince Hasan reiterated three days ago Jordan's commitment to the peace process and to the support of all efforts to make progress in this process.

[Badawi] Suppose, however, that the Palestinian-Israeli track continues to falter. Is Jordan willing to pursue the talks with Israel, especially the economic talks?

[Al-Hasan] Let us be optimistic. We wish that all questions are resolved by patience. The road is difficult and long. We hope that progress will be made on this track.

[Badawi] What about press reports about some tension in relations with the PLO at present?

[Al-Hasan] What distinguishes the Jordanian relationship with all Arab brothers, the Palestinian brothers in particular, is that it is a relationship of brotherhood and a special relationship, in the full sense of this word. We are all in the same boat. Jordan's contribution to the Palestinian cause, since its inception, reflects this brotherly relationship. Since the new approach in Madrid, Jordan has provided every possible support, primarily the umbrella provided for the Palestinian brothers, so they can overcome procedural obstacles. This enabled them to achieve recognition. Jordan has sought diligently to give prominence to the Palestinian decision and respect their choices. Jordan is still doing all it can so they can regain their legitimate, inalienable rights. This Jordanian policy has never changed or vacillated. It is known to people everywhere. His majesty the king has always been very clear about this support. As I have said,

this policy was not seasonal, nor was it tactical. It was based on conviction and is one of the foundations of Jordanian policy toward the Palestine question in its entirety.

[Badawi] So does Jordan expect President 'Arafat to sign the economic and financial agreements with Jordan?

[Al-Hasan] As I have said, the Jordanian-Palestinian relationship is a special one. Our support for the Palestinian brothers still stands, out of our respect for their assumption of their historic responsibilities and their independent decision and the fact that the PLO has, of its own free will, made the necessary, tangible progress on the Palestinian-Israeli track.

Chief of Staff Receives Russian Military Group

JN2012171493 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1600 GMT 20 Dec 93

[Text] Staff General 'Abd-al-Hafiz Mar'i al-Ka'abinah, chairman of the joint chiefs of staff, today received Lieutenant General Vlimtin Korablenikov, first deputy commander of the Russian Army Main Directorate for Combat Training [name and title as heard], and his delegation.

During the meeting, the chairman of the joint chiefs of staff reviewed the general situation in the region, the region's strategic importance, and the humanitarian role played by the Jordanian Armed Forces to preserve peace and security in various parts of the world. The conferees discussed aspects of cooperation and coordination and issues of mutual concern.

The meeting was attended by His Highness Prince 'Abdallah Bin-al-Husayn, commander of the Special Forces; the chief of the Royal Ground Forces; a number of assistant chiefs of staff; the Russian ambassador in Amman; and the Russian military attache.

The visiting lieutenant general was later given a military briefing on the development of the Jordanian Armed Forces in all fields.

Acting Prime Minister Comments on GCC Summit

JN2112103293 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 21 Dec 93 pp 1, 24

[Text] Amman—AL-DUSTUR—Jordan has stressed the importance of the Gulf Cooperation Council [GCC] summit convening in Riyadh. In a statement to AL-DUSTUR, Acting Prime Minister Dr. Ma'n Abu-Nuwar said: All the Arabs are turning their eyes to the leaders of the sisterly Gulf states, who are holding their conference in Riyadh, in view of the importance of the issues and topics which the Gulf summit will discuss and in view of their important repercussions.

Dr. Abu-Nuwar expressed hope that the blessed Gulf summit will be a firm step toward convening the long-awaited expanded Arab summit. He expressed Jordan's concern to increase meetings and consultations among the Arab leaders in order to face the challenges and dangers facing our one Arab nation, restore Arab rights, and achieve Israel's withdrawal from the occupied Arab territory, particularly Jerusalem, the city, symbol, and essence of peace. The objective also aims at guaranteeing the legitimate rights of the fraternal Palestinian people, particularly their right to self-determination and to establishing the independent Palestinian state on their national soil.

The acting prime minister praised the efforts made by the sisterly GCC states to reinforce their solidarity and strengthen their relations. He noted that this constitutes a source of strength for the Arab nation. He added: We hope that the GCC summit will adopt practical steps to respond to the sincere calls for broader Arab rapprochement to meet the nation's hopes and aspirations on the threshold of the 21st century.

Regarding Jordanian-Qatari relations and his meeting yesterday with the Qatari education minister, Dr. Abu-Nuwar said that the meeting focused on strengthening fraternal relations between Qatar and Jordan, particularly in the field of education and entrenching the values of the one Arab nation.

Dr. Abu-Nuwar said: The meeting dealt with the characteristics of every Arab people and each Arab state as well as with establishing relations on the basis of mutual respect and noninterference in internal affairs. He expressed hope that Jordanian-Qatari relations will be strengthened on all levels within the framework of the Arab solidarity march.

Minister Asks Envoys To Support GATT Membership

JN1912113293 Amman Radio Jordan in English 1100 GMT 19 Dec 93

[Text] Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Talal al-Hasan has conferred at his office separately with a number of European, Asian, Arab, and U.S. ambassadors, as well as the European Community president's representative in Amman.

The minister asked the envoys of these countries to support the Jordanian application to become a member of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, GATT.

Through the agreement, Jordan seeks to expand the scope of economic cooperation with the member states of the GATT. Accession to the agreement requires negotiations and measures that would allow the country concerned to acquire conditions favorable to their economic conditions and domestic and foreign trade and industry.

Army Brigade Set Aside for UN Peacekeeping

JN1812133393 Amman Radio Jordan in English 1200 GMT 18 Dec 93

[Text] Jordan has recently informed the United Nations secretary general that it is placing one Armed Forces brigade under his disposal to activate the Unite Nations' peace-keeping role and to maintain international peace and security.

Jordan's permanent delegate to the United Nations 'Adnan Abu-'Awdah said Jordan is eager to see Serbian aggression against Bosnia-Herzegovina stopped and the dispute among the warring factions resolved by peaceful means.

Addressing the 48th session of the United Nations General Assembly on the situation in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Mr. Abu-'Awdah expressed Jordan's extreme concern over the very serious situation there. He called on the Security Council to adopt a firm attitude towards the Serbs, who are obstructing delivery of relief aid to the Bosnian refugees.

Mr. Abu-'Awdah added that the United Nations has failed to implement its own resolutions on the dispute and this constitutes a serious threat to world peace and international security.

Speaker Resolves Dispute With IAF Deputies

JN1812094493 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 18 Dec p 1

[By JORDAN TIMES staff reporter Ayman al-Safadi]

[Text] Amman—Members of the Islamic Action Front (IAF) parliamentary bloc, who Wednesday [15 December] walked out from a session of the Lower House over a decision to cut short a debate on their proposal to set up a fact-finding committee about the Nov. 8 elections, have resolved their dispute with House Speaker Tahir al-Masri and will continue to attend the meetings of the House.

All but three of the IAF deputies left the session in anger Wednesday after Mr. al-Masri decided to put to vote a proposal by Deputy 'Abdallah Akhu-Irshaydah to end debate on the IAF's motion, which the House killed with a strong majority.

The IAF deputies, who said the debate ended prematurely and before they were given the chance to articulate their reasons for establishing the committee, had turned down mediation efforts by deputies to return to the session, saying they would hold a meeting to discuss whether they would boycott the House in protest.

But "the dispute ended after a meeting with Mr. al-Masri (who) showed understanding for our position," IAF Deputy Hammam Sa'id told the JORDAN TIMES Friday.

"We will continue to attend the House session," said Dr. Sa'id.

He said that during the meeting, which took late Wednesday evening, the IAF deputies explained to Mr. al-Masri that an issue as serious as setting up a committee to investigate the conduct of the elections should have been discussed more thoroughly.

"The man understood our position," said Dr. Sa'id.

Over 10 deputies had spoken on the IAF proposal before the issue was killed, but the Islamist deputies had insisted that most of the lawmakers who expressed views on the motion were opposed to it.

Mr. al-Masri, who could not be reached for comment Friday, had argued that the seating order determined who among the deputies took the floor.

Supported by other parliamentarians, Mr. al-Masri said he was obliged by the internal regulations of the House to take a vote on whether the debate should end after Mr. Irshaydah proposed so.

The House vote against the proposal constituted the first defeat of the 16-strong IAF bloc in the 12th Parliament, which saw the number of IAF deputies and their supporters reduced to about 22 from over 30 in the 11th Parliament.

The IAF deputies are expected to suffer another defeat when they push for adjusting a draft law on the sales of alcohol to meet the requirements of Islamic sharia.

The draft legislation would ban Muslims from producing, importing and selling alcohol but leave the door open for Christians to engage in the trade. The Islamists said they would push for a complete ban on alcohol, an industry which contributes about JD 40 million in fees and customs to the treasury annually.

The House Wednesday referred the draft law to its Judiciary Committee, which includes five IAF members and is headed by independent Islamist 'Abd al-Baqi Jammu.

Six IAF Members Resign To Protest 'Bias'

JN2112120893 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 21 Dec 93 pp 32, 24

[Text] Amman—AL-DUSTUR—Six members of the Islamic Action Front [IAF] have submitted their resignations from the IAF Executive Bureau. In a collective letter of resignation submitted by Dr. Qandil Shakir, [House of Representatives members] Dr. Hammam Sa'id and Dr. Ahmad al-Kawfahi, Dr. 'Ali al'Utum, Dr. Rajih al-Kurdi, and Ziyah Abu-Ghanimah, the resignations were attributed to the "clear bias inside the bureau and departure from the party's bylaws."

The resigning members asked the IAF Shura Council to set up a committee to investigate these violations. They explained that their move has been motivated by the "repetition of such practices," which made their continued membership of the Executive Bureau intolerable.

According to the letter, the resigning members said that out of concern for the continued existence of the party and to achieve its objectives and people's expectations, they asked their brother members of the Shura Council to put an end to these practices.

In a memorandum to the head of the front's Shura Council and the IAF secretary general, the resigning members said that an emergency IAF Executive Bureau meeting was held to discuss one topic; namely, new applications for IAF membership. The meeting took place at 2130 on Monday last week [13 December]. It was attended by 12 bureau members. After four hours of discussion and when a vote was about to take place, there was a trend to accept the new requests which met all requirements. "However," the memorandum adds, "we were surprised by a shower of abuse from brothers [House of Representatives members] Hamzah Mansur, 'Abd-al-Rahim al-'Ukur, and Muhammad 'Uwaydah against brother Ziyad Abu-Ghanimah, including direct abuse that we deem unfit to mention in this memorandum."

They said in their memorandum: "Afterward, the three brothers withdrew from the session. The secretary general followed them to convince them to return. However, they returned only to continue to heap abuse on brother Ziyad Abu-Ghanimah. Instead of blaming them for violating the regulations and gravely insulting members of the bureau and the bureau in general, the secretary general adjourned the session, although there was a legal quorum and although he earlier called for continuing the session. However, he later left the meeting, which made us interpret his adjournment of the session as a show of solidarity with the three brothers. We continued our meeting to discuss this serious matter. Our decision was to submit a collective resignation and call for setting up an investigation committee."

Arabs Urged To Reconsider Stand on Peace Talks

JN1812102393 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 18 Dec 93 pp 1, 25

[Editorial: "The Learned Lesson"]

[Text] Recent developments and the serious impasse in the talks between the PLO and Israel on the Declaration of Principles necessitate that Arab negotiators on all tracks reconsider their stands toward the entire peace process. It is clear that Israel seeks to gain time and world support. Israel claims that it is concerned about peace and the peace process, and that the other side, the Palestinians, become extremists when they want to safeguard their dignity and to impose sovereignty on the so-called autonomous region in Gaza and Jericho.

It is worth mentioning that one of the things that the agreement and the Palestinian leadership were criticized for was claims that the provisions of the agreement were incomplete, unclear, and ambiguous, and were even interpreted in favor of the Israeli side. The answer to this was that the agreement and its implementation were supported by verbal guarantees from the U.S. sponsor. It seemed that some of us also believed that Israeli and U.S. "good intentions" could resolve any problem that might emerge as a result of the clear defects in the provisions of the Gaza-Jericho First agreement.

Now, Rabin and his government are clearly exposing their intentions and plan to put the Palestinian leadership in a serious impasse, where it is difficult for it to retreat—especially since it has put all its weight behind the agreement—and, in light of the strong opposition—even from within the ranks of the leadership itself—difficult for it to make further concessions, particularly regarding the issues of crossings, the autonomous region borders, the security of settlements, and the Israeli Army deployment.

It seems that, since the beginning of the implementation of the agreement, Israel has been seeking to reduce Palestinian gains as much as possible in order to guarantee that the future autonomy rule will be easy to contain and prevent from developing and expanding, so that when the final status negotiations begin, everything will have been formed within weak frameworks in accordance with the Israeli trusteeship and hegemony.

Based on this, and at this crucial stage, the Palestinian leadership must restore its Arab support to confront the Israeli attempts to deal with each Arab side separately. Arab negotiators must also reconsider their calculations in light of these new facts, which were exposed during attempts to implement the autonomous rule. Most important of these calculations is the coordination among the Arab parties participating in the peace process. No Arab side has an alternative to a just and comprehensive peace that restores the full rights of the nation, its sons, and future generations.

Arab Coordination Before Talks Stressed

JN1812101193 Amman AL-ASWAQ in Arabic 18 Dec 93 p 17

[Editorial: "The Multilateral Negotiations and the Absence of Arab Coordination"]

[Text] Reports said five multilateral committees will convene in five Arab capitals soon to discuss regional issues and the fate of the peoples in the region within the framework of international efforts resulting from the Madrid peace conference.

We say very clearly that what has made these Arab capitals host Israeli delegations and other delegations from all over the world to discuss water, refugees, economic development, and arms inspections raises our hopes that these capitals will also host inter-Arab committees to discuss the future of the Arab homeland. These meetings should be based on the fact that the Arabs are one nation divided by plots that make their meetings impossible, except within the framework of multilateral negotiations in which Israel tops of the list of participants.

As we move toward a stage of peace and a comprehensive redrafting of the political and economic patterns in the region, we are in dire need of Arab meetings on all official and popular levels to study the prospects for our joint future—whether we agree on this joint future or not. In order to avoid the imposition of these arrangements on us without having a say on them, this vicious cycle, around which inter-Arab relations have evolved, should be broken. This necessitates a response to calls for Arab meetings and coordination away from the multilateral negotiations and the cycle of stalemates and suspensions that has characterized Arab relations since the Gulf crisis.

Each Arab country, regardless of its geographical or political position, cannot avoid the negative or positive effects that will follow the stage of peace in the new Middle East. Therefore, joint Arab study, which has been precluded for weak and unacceptable reasons, is the only means of maximizing the gains that will be good for all and minimizing the losses that will spare no one.

If the current course of Arab relations continues and communications continue to be interrupted, we will be realizing the full objectives of all those who want to deal with us as isolated parties to the multilateral negotiations—negotiations that decide our future—while we have no real influence on what is taking place in them. What we do in these negotiations is simply change roles, paying for our division in a lack of power to influence the resolutions concerning our future and our destiny.

Reopening of Bank Branches in West Bank Viewed

JN1912112193 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 19 Dec 93 p 22

["Highlights" column by Dr. Fahd al-Fanik; "Jordanian Banks in Palestine"]

[Text] Jordan has reached two agreements on reopening of branches of Jordanian banks in Palestine. The agreement with Israel has been signed and is valid. As for the agreement with the PLO, Yasir 'Arafat refused to sign it, or he delayed signing it until another visit to Jordan because he has some reservations on the draft agreement worked out by experts from the Jordanian and Palestinian sides. These reservations indicate his eagerness to maintain economic independence from Jordan more than his eagerness to realize economic independence from Israel. He wants to commit the Central Bank not to make any monetary or banking decision concerning the West Bank before receiving the advance approval of the Palestinian authority.

According to the Declaration of Principles agreement, the monetary and banking issues in the self-rule area are not within the jurisdiction of the self-rule authority, but this jurisdiction is maintained by the Israeli occupation authority during the five-year interim period.

This means that the Jordanian-Israeli agreement is applicable without need for a parallel Jordanian-Palestinian agreement. However, Jordan does not act only on legal grounds, and prefers not to make an important step in the Palestinian territories without full coordination with the PLO. Agreement with the PLO is necessary from the perspective of good manners and good intentions. If 'Arafat insists on not signing the economic cooperation agreement, Jordan should decide whether it will go ahead and reopen branches of its banks in Palestine or refrain from doing so in consideration of 'Arafat's desire.

If reopening of branches of Jordanian banks was decided, then which party will have the supervision and control authority on these branches? The Jordanian side will say it is the Central Bank of Jordan [CBJ]. But the branches should present periodical reports on their operations to the Israeli authorities. The Israeli authorities say that the Basel formula will be implemented and the supervision will be mutual. The CBJ will assume the responsibilities of the motherland's bank, while the Israeli Central Bank will assume the responsibilities of the bank of the host country. This means that the Israeli Central Bank's responsibility toward the Jordanian branches in Palestine will be similar to the CBJ responsibility toward al-Rafidayn Bank or the British Bank in Amman.

Practically, the branches of the Jordanian banks in the West Bank cannot ignore the instructions of both monetary authorities and will, in any case, implement the strictest instructions.

Explosion Hits Phalangist Party Headquarters

NC2012164193 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1635 GMT 20 Dec 93

[Text] There is no new information about the explosion that occurred inside the Phalangist Party central headquarters in al-Sayfi [east Beirut] at 1810, injuring a number of people. We will broadcast the latest news as it becomes available.

This is just in from the editor's desk: We have just learned that the explosion inside the Phalangist Party Central headquarters in al-Sayfi targeted the second floor. Ambulances and Internal Security Forces rushed to the scene to evacuate the dead and injured. There are as yet no information on the identities of the casualties. We will give you more details as they become available.

Explosive Charges Placed Outside

NC2012171493 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1645 GMT 20 Dec 93

[Dispatch by unidentified correspondent from the Phalangist Party Headquarters in al-Sayfi in Beirut—live]

[Text] A powerful explosion destroyed large parts of the Phalangist Party headquarters in al-Sayfi [in predominately Christian East Beirut] about 20 minutes ago. The blast was caused by an explosive charge placed in a pit behind the building, along the side facing the sea.

Here at the scene, the number of Phalangist Party Political Bureau and Central Council members who were wounded in the explosion is not known. All the wounded were taken to hospitals. There are no casualty figures yet. I have seen some people dusting themselves off who have blood covering their faces and clothes.

The security authorities who inspected the scene of the explosion affirmed that the explosive charge was not inside the building but was place behind the outer wall of the building, along the side that faces the sea. The explosion destroyed the conference hall where the members of the Phalangist Party Political Bureau and Central Council were holding a meeting.

Therefore, this is the painful picture from the Phalangist Party headquarters—debris, destruction, and blood covering the ground. All of us here at the headquarters who witnessed the explosion have not been informed about any dead among the Phalangist party comrades. A number of them have been gravely wounded, however.

The meeting was being held under Salah Matar, the eldest member of the Political Bureau, because of the indisposition of party leader [George Sa'adah], who was at home, and because of the absence of the deputy leader, who is abroad.

Phalangist Leader Not in Building

NC2012171093 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1650 GMT 20 Dec 93

[Text] This is just in from the editor's desk: New information is available on the blast that targeted the Phalangist Party central headquarters in al-Sayfi. We learned a short while ago that Phalangist Party Leader Dr. George Sa'adah was not in the conference hall because he is indisposed and was forced to stay home in bed. The Party Deputy Leader, Attorney Munir al-Hajj, was also absent because he is abroad. The Phalangist Party Political Bureau meeting was chaired by Attorney Salah Matar, as the ranking member.

A Phalangist source said a short while ago that a number of party members who were in the building were injured, some seriously. He said that the explosive device was placed on the wall adjacent to the main conference hall where the Phalangist Party Political Bureau members and the Central Council meet.

So far, we do not have a precise casualty count, but there are approximately 10 injured and one dead. However, security sources advised us a short while ago that the evacuation of the casualties to hospitals is continuing. We have no details on the names of the casualties. It seems, however, that the explosion was very strong and reverberated throughout Beirut and caused heavy damage to the Phalangist Party building and the adjacent building, which belongs to that party and houses a support fund office for Phalangist party members.

Security forces have cordoned off the scene and investigations are continuing. We will broadcast information as available.

Explosion Kills 2, Wounds 130

NC2012204593 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 2015 GMT 20 Dec 93

[Text] The explosion at the party headquarters in al-Sayfi has killed two and wounded 130 others. It destroyed large parts of the building. It has been learned that the explsion resulted from the detonation of a large explosive device containing 150 to 200 kg of explosives. The device was placed in a plot behind the building, along the side that overlooks the sea.

Phalangist Leader Comments

NC2112072093 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 0615 GMT 21 Dec 93

[Excerpts] The bloody explosion that rocked the party's headquarters yesterday cannot make the Phalangists change their national line nor can the blood impede their political strides.

Lebanon and the Phalangists yesterday had a common rendezvous with Lebanon's enemies. Both the Lebanese and the Phalangists bled because of this ugly crime.

Two martyrs—Antoine Ba'qlini and Michel Daww—fell in the explosion. Some 200 others were wounded.

The Phalangist Party leader received telephone calls from President al-Hirawi condemning the explosion. Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri, who is in Damascus, also called and condemned the incident. Deputies and political figures followed suit. Syrian Information Minister Muhammad Salman called Dr. Sa'adah and strongly denounced the incident.

Dr. Sa'adah condemned the treacherous hand and affirmed that the party will not depart from the policy of rationalism and conscience. He said: We are destined to pay the taxes of war and peace.

He said: The treacherous hand that attacked the Phalangists has harmed all the Lebanese areas and factions. The bloodshed constituted additional evidence of the unity of the Lebanese people.

In a statement issued yesterday, Dr. Sa'adah announced the death of Political Bureau member Antoine Ba'qlini. He said the party will never deviate from its faith in the one homeland and the united people and will never depart from the policy of rationalism and conscience charted by the party during its 19th extraordinary congress. The broad lines of this policy are unity, accord, and coexistence in a sovereign country that can make decisions. [passage omitted]

Dr. Sa'adah added: The message was received, with all its fire and devastation. It is a message against peace, he said, adding that the Phalangists would continue to make sacrifices for the sake of this peace and forge ahead with their march. [passage omitted]

The Phalangist Party yesterday declared seven days of mourning during which flags will fly at half mast on Phalangist buildings and establishments.

Body of Infant Found

NC2112094893 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0915 GMT 21 Dec 93

[Text] Sources from the Internal Security Forces have said that rescue operations at the Phalangist headquarters in al-Sayfi and buildings nearby are continuing. A short time ago, the civil defense men, carrying out their rescue operations supervised by Brigadier General Rafiq al-Fighali, found the body of infant Samu'il Dib under the rubble of a building near the Phalangist headquarters.

The civil defense men also found four-year old Madonna Saqr, who was taken to the American University Hospital.

Prime Minister al-Hariri Leaves for Damascus

NC2012173393 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1630 GMT 20 Dec 93

[Text] We have just received a report that Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri left for Damascus a short while ago.

Al-Hariri's Visit to Turkey Criticized

NC2012122993 Beirut AL-SAFIR in Arabic 16 Dec 93 p 1

[Editorial by Talal Salman: "The Incomprehensible Visit"]

[Text] The last "senior Turk" to come to Lebanon was [former President] Celal Bayar, whose visit during Camille Sham'un's term crowned a peculiar attempt to establish an alliance protecting Israel, abrogating the region's Arab character, changing its identity, and turning it into something called "The Middle East."

The latest pronouncements that the Lebanese heard from Turkish officials were repeated threats to bombard al-Biqa' from the air on the pretext that it has training camps for the Kurdish Workers Party (PKK) as if such a bombardment can resolve the issue of the national rights of that great "minority" that makes up 25 percent of Turkey's population (the official count of Turkey's Kurds or "the mountain Turks" as the regime that refuses to recognize their identity used to call them is 14 million).

This is why the Lebanese people could not understand the reason for the four-day visit that the head of their government will begin today in Turkey. Nor could they understand the official Turkish statement that spoke of ties "between the two fraternal nations?!"

It is not clear from where this fraternity comes, especially as the Turkish foreign minister's visit to Israel a few weeks ago fully demonstrated the (official) Turkish attitude of hostility to all Arabs. It was merely a sample exposing official Turkish positions.

What the Lebanese people know of Turkish positions is that they are very hostile to the Arabs, cutting off Syria and Iraq's water supply and causing them agricultural, industrial, and economic catastrophes. Turkish positions are characterized by something resembling an actual alliance with the Arabs' national enemy Israel.

Of course, this does not mean that the Turk is the Arab's enemy. Quite the contrary. What it does mean is that official Turkish policy has not been friendly to the Arabs, frequently being rather cool, even hostile. It has been remarkably warm toward the Zionist entity and its designs on Arab territory.

Why this visit then? What can Turkey or "Turkey's young lady" [Ciller] "give" us. She is the successor to the "Young Turks," who overthrew the caliphate, then Islam, and finally threw out the Arab script. They then placed Turkey on the lowest rung of the West's ladder (the West has not yet accepted Turkey except as a sentry against others; it has sometimes been a sentry against Communism and more often against Islam).

No one knows of any convincing reason for this visit unless perhaps it is a step on the Gaza-Jericho road in search of a new Middle East to replace Arabdom and the Arabs.

Armenian Speaker Ararktsyan Arrives, Comments

NC2012073993 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0530 GMT 20 Dec 93

[Text] Armenian Supreme Council Speaker Babken Ararktsyan arrived in Beirut yesterday heading a delegation of five deputies and various officials. The visit comes at the invitation of Chamber Speaker Nabih Birri, who was at the airport to welcome his guest.

In an arrival statement, the Armenian speaker said: We want to promote our ties with the Lebanese people. We are grateful for the invitation and we hope positive results will emerge soon.

Asked if he had specific proposals in support of Lebanon, especially as there is a large Armenian community in Lebanon, Ararktsyan said: After World War I, Lebanon opened its doors to Armenian orphans and refugees and granted them Lebanese citizenship. Our people will never forget the protection and warm reception accorded this community. He added: Now that Armenia has become an independent state, we must consolidate our relations. I urge the Lebanese Armenians to try harder to serve this country, Lebanon, their homeland. I also beseech them to boost relations between the two peoples and countries.

Asked about the possibility of cooperation between the Armenian Supreme Council and the Lebanese Chamber of Deputies, Ararktsyan said: This is why we have come. We will work hard to improve the bilateral cultural, humanitarian, and spiritual ties.

Asked about Armenia's stance on Israeli acts of aggression against south Lebanon and the implementation of Resolution 425, the Armenian speaker said: We believe the solution must be peaceful and Resolution 425 must be implemented. Israel must also submit and withdraw from Lebanese territory. Speaker Birri said:

[Begin recording] [Unidentified correspondent] Mr. Speaker, what is your comment on the Armenian speaker's visit to Lebanon?

[Birri] First, I would like to thank the speaker and his delegation for accepting our invitation to visit Lebanon and choosing Lebanon as the first leg of his Arab tour. This is unequivocal evidence that the speaker and the Supreme Council in Armenia yearn to establish strong relations [word indistinct]. We will try to promote the ties between the Lebanese Chamber of Deputies and the Armenian Supreme Council. We hope we can work out a draft joint agreement between us.

We must not forget that Armenia and Lebanon have suffered historically but the difference is that Lebanon still suffers. There is a higher common interest for [word indistinct] Lebanon improving Lebanese-Armenian relations. [end recording]

Signs Cooperation Agreement

NC2012152593 Shanayh Voice of the Mountain in Arabic 1230 GMT 20 Dec 93

[Text] The Armenian parliamentary delegation led by Armenian Supreme Council Speaker Ararktsyan has visited President al-Hirawi, Chamber of Deputies Speaker Birri, and Prime Minister al-Hariri. Deputies Akram Shuhayyib, George Qusarji, and Jack Djukhadaryan accompanied the delegation. Bilateral ties and means to develop them were discussed in the three meetings.

Ararktsyan said after meeting President al-Hirawi that the visit is in the two countries' interest, adding: We hope to see Lebanese officials visit Armenia in official delegations to strengthen bilateral ties.

Birri and Ararktsyan signed an agreement for cooperation between the Lebanese and Armenian parliaments. The agreement stipulates the formation of permanent parliamentary groups in both Armenia and Lebanon to hold regular consultations with each other, discuss world and regional issues of common concern, and work to consolidate cooperation between the two countries in politics, economy, science, technology, and culture.

In a speech after the signing ceremony, Speaker Birri said the agreement is an encouraging and fruitful beginning for both our governments and nations toward a better future and continuous cooperation. Ararktsyan responded by saying he had invited Speaker Birri to visit Armenia and affirming that he will be welcome there. He remarked that the friendship between Lebanon and Armenia is deep-rooted and will strengthen in the future.

Al-Hariri Views Criticism of TV Broadcasts

NC2012141493 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1145 GMT 20 Dec 93

[Text] Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri has responded to criticism of his government.

In a news conference at Government House at noon today, he explained the media's current questions, primarily on satellite transmission, saying they aim to create a political crisis. He warned those who pose such questions to be wary of their national responsibility, especially now that Lebanon has begun to progress.

He clarified that the Cabinet approved of satellite transmission last Wednesday to prevent chaos in such transmissions, stressing that the issue is linked with pan-Arab security and Lebanon's relations with Arab countries.

The state, he said, cannot remain idle about private stations transmitting programs [via satellite] that Arab countries may not like. He added: We hastened to decide on the issue out of concern for relations with Arabs. This does not mean relegating the organization of video and audio media. He said the issue will be put to the Cabinet soon and added: If we are delaying it, it is because we do not want to make hasty decisions.

Al-Hariri said the aim of Future Television's satellite transmission was to test equipment procured by the Communications Ministry and that transmission will stop at midnight tomorrow, meaning that talk of a monopoly is untrue.

Al-Hariri also answered correspondents' questions about the Middle East Airline Company and amending the Housing Bank law, saying the amendment does not apply to individuals but to construction merchants.

On the Council of Reconstruction and Development, he affirmed that it is under permanent control. He said some parties are criticizing the council's independent action to secure shares in its board of directors, especially because the mandate of eight of the board members expires in a month.

The prime minister wanted to affirm the government's concern about living and social conditions. He also dealt with every political issue concerning the negotiations with Israel that will be on the agenda of the [Lebanese-Syrian] Higher Council tomorrow.

He reiterated that the ball of establishing a comprehensive peace is still in Israel's court.

Government Moves To End TV Channel Proliferation

NC1812060793 Paris AFP in English 2058 GMT 17 Dec 93

[By Selim Yassine]

[Text] Beirut, Dec 17 (AFP)—The Lebanese government has begun a drive to curb the proliferation of television channels in the country, where 48 private channels are already broadcasting illegally, some by satellite.

The cabinet approved a decree on Thursday [16 December] banning the creation of new channels and, from next Tuesday, satellite broadcasts, pending proper regulation.

However, the decree has not been signed by President Ilyas al-Hirawi, and the heads of the major private networks urged him on Friday not to do so.

Meanwhile some accused Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri of trying to gain a monopoly on satellite transmissions for the channels under his control.

Al-Hariri owns nearly all the shares in the Future TV channel, which has been broadcasting for one year, as well as 49 percent of Tele Liban, the rest of which is owned by the state.

According to the new decree, only Lebanese nationals can use Arabsat satellite television channels for broadcasting.

Al-Hariri, who has Saudi nationality, has the right to use three of the satellite's 12 channels.

The nine other channels are owned by Saudis: four by businessman Salah Kamel, four by the Al-Mawared company, and one by Prince Khalid Bin-Sultan, who also owns the Arabic-language daily Al-Hayah.

The new regulation sidelines the strongest channel, the Lebanese Broadcasting Corporation (LBC), owned by the former Christian militia, the Lebanese Forces.

LBC signed an agreement with Prince Khalid to secure an outlet via Arabsat, but it could prove useless if the new decree takes effect.

LBC director general Pierre Daher told reporters the decree was "tailor-made to give a satellite broadcasting monopoly to a well-known channel and to bar us from satellite broadcasting."

The charge was echoed in the opposition daily Al-Nida' Al-Watan, which ran an editorial with the headline: "General Outcry Against the Proposed Monopolization of Satellite Broadcasts." It said, "business deals are struck, and the law is then fashioned accordingly."

Officials at Future TV said simply that they saw nothing untoward in reserving exclusive satellite transmission rights for Lebanese nationals.

Amal Movement Claims Attacks in South

NC2012174693 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1630 GMT 20 Dec 93

[Text] The Amal Movement announced that, at 1430 today, one of its groups, marking the anniversary of the death of [Prophet Muhammad's daughter] Sayyidah Zaynab, attacked two positions of the occupation forces in 'Alman and al-Shumariyah, engaging their defenders in fire exchanges in which machine guns and rockets were used. The movement said that the attackers succeeded in destroying fortifications at the two positions and inflicted human losses on the enemy. A South Lebanese Army patrol combed the surrounding valleys after the attack.

In another statement, the Amal Movement said that one of its groups retaliated to the Israeli shelling of the liberated villages by shelling the 'Alman and al-Shumariyah posts at 1500.

In another development, the resistance announced that one of its groups attacked the South Lebanese Army position in Tallusah at noon with machine guns and rockets. Due to the security cordon that the militia has placed around the site, no information is available about casualties.

Al-'Allaf on Peace Talks, Geneva Summit

JN2012121893 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 20 Dec 93 p 40

[Interview with Muwaffaq al-'Allaf, head of the Syrian delegation to the bilateral negotiations with Israel, by Mustafa Yusuf in Cairo; date not given]

[Text] [Yusuf] What do you think of the Israeli negotiator, having succeeded in reaching an agreement with the Palestinian side?

[Al-'Allaf] Having achieved a separate solution on the Palestinian track, the Israeli negotiator will be in no hurry to make concrete progress on the other tracks. The Palestinian-Israeli agreement was reached in secret. It represents a partial, and not a comprehensive, solution. Had Israel sought a comprehensive solution on all tracks, it would have worked seriously to reach agreements in Washington on clear, agreed-upon foundations. We adhere to the peace process in line with the foundations on which it was launched in 1991, especially a comprehensive, just solution and the implementation of Resolutions 242 and 338.

By concluding a separate agreement, Israel wants to show that Arab states are separate. Israel seeks to weaken Arab resolve, dictate its conditions, and stick to its positions. It also wants to weaken the Arab negotiator, render his decisions unbalanced, and thus make him subject to collapse and submission to its conditions. This will not happen. We are now more familiar with Israeli intentions. Israel wants to have everything without giving anything in return. It is now clear to us that Israel wants peace, land, and lifting the Arab boycott. It also wants to be accorded special treatment. Israel is the usurping, aggressive, and murderous party. It is killing and arresting Palestinians. It wants the world to adapt to this reality. It has succeeded in establishing good relations with most of the states which had previously refused even the principle of dialogue with it. This is really a major achievement which Israel had never dreamed of.

[Yusuf] The head of the Israeli delegation said he had wished for a comprehensive solution to Arab issues, but he found a hard-line Syrian-Lebanese approach. How do you reply to this?

[Al-'Allaf] Had the Israeli negotiator sought a comprehensive solution, he would have demonstrated flexibility. The Israeli negotiator, however, was intransigent and inflexible. We tried to break the deadlock, until we reached the 11th round. The Israeli negotiator insisted on setting traps, creating difficulties, and leading negotiations away from their natural course and objectives on which we joined the Madrid talks.

Also, had Israel sought a comprehensive solution on all tracks, it would have worked seriously to reach agreements during the Washington talks. The Gaza-Jericho agreement of principles was a surprise to the Israeli negotiator and a shock to the Arab negotiators. The PLO Executive Committee members and others who are very close to the leadership were surprised by the agreement. Then confusion ensued, accusations were traded, and people started blaming each other.

[Yusuf] What do you have to say about the Palestinian-Israeli Declaration of Principles?

[Al-'Allaf] The Declaration of Principles is unclear. The principles enshrined in it are neither clear, nor specific, not to mention that they are inadequate. This has been proven by what is currently happening to the Taba and Cairo committees. The negotiations are still proceeding. With regard to the withdrawal deadline, it has passed, whereas the withdrawal has not started. I do not expect the withdrawal to be completed by 13 April. The Israeli negotiators are creating obstacles; this situation is reminiscent of what happened during the Washington rounds of bilateral talks.

[Yusuf] How willing are you to continue with the peace talks?

[Al-'Allaf] We adhere to the peace talks. We are willing to cooperate to render the peace process a success as long as the peace process continues to pursue a just and comprehensive solution. A comprehensive solution would ensure the success of the peace process. With regard to partial solutions and limited withdrawals, they cannot lead to durable peace in the region. In the same vein, peace cannot be achieved with a single party to the exclusion of other parties. We are optimistic, because we want the peace process to come to a successful conclusion. However, the Israeli side must demonstrate the necessary cooperation. The Israelis must shun their previous tactics. Israeli negotiators must comply with the relevant international resolutions if they are seeking just and comprehensive peace. I advise Israeli negotiators to halt their time-wasting tactics, and to shun the evasion and maneuvering they demonstrated during the past two years. Throughout these two years, no seriousness was detected in the Israeli negotiators' conduct. This did not help the efforts to achieve just and comprehensive peace. I advise Israeli negotiators to abandon the ideas and views they promoted in the past, for we have acquired experience in this regard. We now are well aware of what Israel wants to achieve.

[Yusuf] You have spoken a great deal about what Israel wants to achieve. Could you enlighten us about the solutions Israel wants to achieve?

[Al-'Allaf] Israel's failure to commit itself to complete withdrawal from the Golan and other occupied Arab territories within the context of just and comprehensive peace shows that it is seeking to force accomplished facts on the Arabs. It wants to make the Arabs accept its aggressive plans, partial solutions, and separate deals. But, under no circumstances shall we accept the Israeli version of peace, which is the acquisition of both land and peace. We will not cede a single inch of Israeli-occupied territory. The same goes for the Lebanese side. International resolutions provide for the restoration of

our territories. Israel would be nursing delusions if it believes that the time factor could weaken our resolve to restore the occupied territories. This will never happen. We will not accept anything short of comprehensive and just peace.

[Yusuf] Is there now a slimmer chance for peace as some political analysts think?

[Al-'Allaf] The chances for peace are now better than before because of the current international climate and the increase in the number of people seeking to achieve peace. Although there are people inside Israel who oppose peace, their opposition is not as strong, fierce, or violent as in previous years. The Israeli people are convinced of the importance of negotiations, peace, and stability and every one has a genuine desire to achieve peace. Israeli intransigence, maneuvers, and lack of seriousness are behind the fact that success has not been achieved yet.

[Yusuf] Israel is criticizing you because you are not preventing the Palestinian opposition groups in Syria from voicing their opposition to the Declaration of Principles.

[Al-'Allaf] How can we stop them if they stand against Israel's policy over an issue that concerns their cause. The Israeli prime minister could not stop the Likud leader from opposing the Gaza-Jericho agreement, so how could he ask us to silence the Palestinian opposition? We have no right, nor is it our duty to silence the Palestinian opposition. This is their right and their viewpoint, and every one must respect them. Israel respected the viewpoint of the settlers in the occupied territories and did not stop them from carrying out acts of sabotage and setting fire to Palestinian cars before the eyes of the world. The only thing the Israeli authorities did was to issue press statements. It did not do anything on the official level. Instead, they turned a blind eye to what is happening. Did you expect them to open fire on them or throw them in jail? This did not happen, and it never happened before.

[Yusuf] What about your coordination with Lebanon?

[Al-'Allaf] We have agreed to work together and we did not set priorities. Our main priority is a comprehensive and just peace in the Arab territories. For us, south Lebanon is as dear as the Golan Heights and we do not differentiate between them. Leaders in both countries believe in this. Israel cannot take on any of us alone, one at a time. We are on the road together and there are no differences in opinion. The leaders agree on everything and the opposition agrees on everything and none of us is going to go along with anything without telling the other. The issues are one and occupation is one and there is no difference between a Syrian territory and a Lebanese territory.

[Yusuf] What does Syria think about Israel's attitude toward the implementation of the agreement with the Palestinians?

[Al-'Allaf] We want the Palestinians to attain their rights as soon as possible. However, there is nothing in the Israeli authorities' behavior that indicates there is even a minimum of commitment to what is contained in the agreement. There is no doubt that the Palestinians are sticking to their positions and exerting strenuous efforts to confront this procrastination. I would like to refer to President al-Asad's recent efforts following U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher's visit, efforts which largely contributed to placing the peace process back on its sound track.

We hope that the upcoming summit between U.S. President Bill Clinton and President Hafiz al-Asad next month will achieve progress, unfreeze the Israeli stand, and establish an atmosphere that will be conducive to the attainment of a solution that will satisfy the Arab side's interest in bolstering the peace process.

[Yusuf] Given that you are close to President al-Asad, what topics do you expect the U.S. and Syrian Presidents to discuss?

[Al-'Allaf] I cannot predict what Presidents al-Asad and Clinton will discuss, and I also cannot speak on behalf of Syria. I hope that what they will discuss will be commensurate with the gravity and importance of peace in the next stage, not only for the Arab and Israeli side and the Middle East, but also for the two countries that cosponsor the peace process in the Middle East and for the establishment of a just and comprehensive peace that also serves the interests of the U.S. sponsor.

[Yusuf] Syria is accused of promoting its relations with the United States before promoting peace with Israel.

[Al-'Allaf] Such talk could have been said had we not participated in the U.S.-sponsored peace process since the very beginning. The peace process embodies the wish of the United States, Russia and the world at large to establish a just and comprehensive peace in the region. This is a sufficient reason for our relations with the world and the United States to be good. However, there is nothing more important than the liberation of the Arab land, which has witnessed thousands of martyrs and successive wars for its liberation and return to the Arabs who yearn for it.

As we announce to Israel and the entire world our quest for peace, Israel must also avoid methods of maneuvering and implement international legitimacy Resolutions 242 and 338. It must also avoid the secret contacts with which it justifies its procrastination in rendering the peace process a success and in returning the lands it agreed to before the eyes of the world on television. The world knows what goes on these days because the world has become a small one and people are aware of what goes on around them.

[Yusuf] Are you holding contacts with Israel on resuming negotiations?

[Al-'Allaf] There are no contacts with Israel within the framework of Arab coordination on negotiations, but there is Arab coordination toward a unified Arab position at the negotiations with Israel. We only have contacts during the negotiations, and these negotiations are supported by the peace process, the UN resolutions, the big powers, and the world community. It is not in the interest of any Arab party to have secret contacts. If Israel really wants a legitimate, declared, comprehensive, and just peace, then there is no need for secret contacts or for creating a single Arab negotiator.

[Yusuf] How do you assess U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher's visit to the region?

[Al-'Allaf] I think that Warren Christopher's tour was aimed at bridging the gaps between views and to negotiate and consult with all parties in order to resume the dialogue among all parties. He restored the peace process to its normal situation, and I hope that Israel's intransigence will not recur, returning us to the vicious circle. The talks that will be held in mid-January will be a good opportunity to get acquainted with the latest developments of Israel's position, which evaded withdrawal and resorted to procrastination and fabrication of pretexts to obstruct handing over the Palestinian lands included in the [Israeli-PLO] agreement.

[Yusuf] Yitzhaq Rabin has recently said that there will not be full withdrawal from the Golan. What is your comment?

[Al-'Allaf] The Syrian position says no peace without full Israeli withdrawal from all Arab territories occupied in 1967, and from all of the Golan. Let Rabin say whatever he wants. The Israeli side is known for its statements, but what the Israeli officials think is different from their statements.

[Yusuf] Why doesn't the Arab side put pressure on the West not to tighten sanctions against Libya?

[Al-'Allaf] We fully desire a just and comprehensive peace. The party that is maneuvering and using tricks is well-known. Although we support Libya in defending its citizens and we feel the Libyan flexibility toward the Lockerbie crisis, there is no connection between peace and Lockerbie crisis. At the same time, we condemn terrorism in all its forms.

[Yusuf] After the Israeli-Palestinian Declaration of Principles was signed, how do you view the Arab position on the Arab boycott of Israel?

[Al-'Allaf] The Arab League's position on the Arab boycott of Israel is based on the need to continue the boycott as long as the reasons behind it remain. The best way to end this boycott is a full Israeli withdrawal from all occupied Arab territories. This is stipulated in all Arab League resolutions, and it was also unanimously approved by all Arab states in their recent resolution issued at the meeting called by Libya. The Arab states stressed that all Arab League resolutions on the boycott will remain effective as long as Israel continues to occupy Arab territories. Where is the Israeli withdrawal that was to take place, even from the Palestinian territories mentioned in the Gaza-Jericho agreement?

[Yusuf] What about the Syrian people's position on achieving peace with Israel?

[Al-'Allaf] If the international community manages to achieve a just and comprehensive peace in the region, our people will comply with the requirements of a peace agreement. The people are interested in peace, security, and stability. At the same time, however, they are interested in the return of all their territories. The people did not agree to sell out a single iota of their own soil. This also applies to the Syrian negotiators and leadership. We are from the people, so what concerns them will also concern both us and our leadership.

[Yusuf] What are the obstacles to peace with Israel?

[Al-'Allaf] They are Israel's lack of seriousness about a comprehensive and just peace. Israel wants peace according to its own desire and whims.

[Yusuf] What about the propaganda that the Arab states support terrorism?

[Al-'Allaf] We should distinguish between struggle and terrorism, and we should also emphasize a people's right to fight colonialism and occupation. A terrorist is a criminal who kills for the sake of robbery, looting, and blackmail. A struggler, however, is one who rejects colonialism, occupation, and repression of freedoms.

The Arab League defined its position on terrorism and strongly condemned it. The Arab summit held in 1985 issued several resolutions condemning terrorism. Joint international plans were worked out to fight terrorism. Syria is part of this nation, so we agreed on what this nation is implementing. We have agreed with the Arab League and the United Nations in their positions against all forms of terrorism.

Palestinians Should 'Head for Madrid' Not Oslo

JN2112091193 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0545 GMT 21 Dec 93

[From the press review]

[Text] Under the headline "Oslo Trap Once More", AL-THAWRAH writes: It will not be possible to emerge from the labyrinth of the ambiguous Oslo agreement by taking the road of that pact again nor by repeating the experience of secret negotiations or veering in the direction of separate deals away from the Washington bilateral talks. The paper advises the negotiating Palestinian team to alter its course and head for Madrid instead of Oslo, since the first option signifies a return to the foundations on which the Madrid conference was launched; namely, UN Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338 and exchanging land for peace rather than exchanging land for capitulation. Having experienced

the sinister intentions harbored by the Tel Aviv rulers toward the peace process, what stops the Palestinian leadership from altering its negotiating course as long as such a shift should not prove too difficult? It is indeed far easier than clinging to futile negotiations with a party whose sole ambition is to derail the entire peace process. Middle East peace cannot possibly come from separate deals nor from departing from the Madrid formula nor even from clinging to negotiations with a party that offers nothing but deception and maneuvers.

AL-THAWRAH concludes: Peace will come only when Israel commits itself to the land-for-peace principle. This translates as its withdrawal from the Golan Heights, south Lebanon, and the rest of the occupied Arab territory, as well as its recognition of the legitimate rights of the Palestinian Arab people. Only Syria's position—a faithful commitment to the Madrid formula—assures the attainment of a just and comprehensive peace.

Under the headline "Transparent Maneuvers", TISHRIN writes: Israel's effort to save 'Arafat is too late. Since the signing of the Oslo agreement, the intifadah has moved into higher gear. It is now obvious that 'Arafat has no control over the situation within or outside the occupied Arab territory. The paper points out 'Arafat's pledge to halt the intifadah and restore calm to the West Bank and Gaza Strip and a promise he made to the Israelis that he would seek an end to the Arab boycott of Israel and urge Arab states to set up diplomatic ties with Israel and open their gates to Israeli influence. In return for all that, 'Arafat would win from the Israelis the removal of the terrorist label that had been attached to him. The paper adds: The Israelis now realize that 'Arafat is in no position to deliver on the obligations to which he had committed himself; specifically, terminating the intifadah and the Arab boycott. Which explains why Rabin is dragging his feet in implementing the Oslo agreement.

TISHRIN concludes: The negotiating Palestinian team in Oslo has made desperate but futile efforts to fulfill these commitments. The credit for that must go to the Palestinian people's steadfastness, their mounting rejection of the agreement and their resolve to resist occupation with all the means at their disposal, and a determined Syrian stance that has kept the Arab position from unravelling and the Arabs from giving in to Israel's ambitions and terms. Syria has exerted itself in the interest of some semblance of Arab solidarity. Syria's effort has kept the Arab boycott of Israel in place, confirmed the right of Arab resistance to stand up to Israeli occupation, and convinced the world that comprehensive peace and regional stability without Syria are just not possible. The world is now also convinced that secret and separate deals will not lead to peace, security, or stability in the Middle East.

Oslo Talks Will Not Advance Agreement

JN2012081893 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0545 GMT 20 Dec 93

[From the press review]

[Text] Under the headline "Returning to the Madrid Foundations," TISHRIN says: Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin has acknowledged that without peace with Syria, the Gaza-Jericho agreement will never achieve progress.

Rabin told only half the truth. No two politicians or observers would differ that the Gaza-Jericho agreement is facing a real impasse, since it departs from the Madrid foundations and a just and comprehensive peace in the Middle East. The Gaza-Jericho accord is no more than a separate deal that brushed aside the rights of the Palestinian people and the UN resolutions which preserve these rights.

By dragging the Palestinian side to conclude such an agreement, Rabin sought to circumvent the basic principle of the peace process; namely, exchanging land for peace. He also sought to besiege Syria, which has always advocated a just and comprehensive peace and publicly and repeatedly announced that separate deals would never achieve peace and that Israeli withdrawal from all the occupied Arab territories is one of the most important aspects of peace.

TISHRIN adds: Over two years and under two different governments, Israel sought to sabotage the Washington talks and constantly plant mines to derail the talks. Indeed, the Oslo agreement is a departure from the course and framework of the peace talks. However, it is the final result that counts. The results appear today to be tragic. The agreement has greatly harmed the peace process, without winning the confidence of the Palestinians. The Palestinians quickly became innocent victims of this agreement, which was signed hastily and in isolation from Syria and the other Arab parties and as part of secret talks.

TISHRIN thinks that returning to Oslo will not advance the agreement. Israel is waiting for the negotiating Palestinian team to submit fully to its demands and conditions. This will further aggravate the situation in the occupied territories, where Palestinian citizens are unanimous that they are the victims of a misleading, deceptive, treacherous conspiracy.

TISHRIN goes on: Returning to the foundations of the Madrid conference and the Washington talks, within the context of Israel's open commitment to implementing Security Council resolutions and exchanging land for peace, is the only way out under the current circumstances.

Syria has repeatedly said it wants a just and comprehensive peace on all fronts of the conflict. The Gaza-Jericho agreement is far removed from the essence and spirit of a just and lasting peace. It is a separate deal concluded at

the expense of the Palestinian people, their rights and ambitions. It is no surprise that the agreement has been rejected by the Palestinians and faced a series of difficulties that cannot be resolved.

TISHRIN concludes: Syria has called for a genuine, durable, and just peace—a peace that removes occupation, restores territory, recognizes rights, primarily Palestinian self-determination. Separate deals, twisted methods, and deceptive maneuvers cannot achieve peace. The Oslo agreement is the best example.

Under the headline "Useless Policy of Handling Each Party Alone," AL-BA'TH says: The bright lights that flashed on the White House lawn, while signing the Oslo agreement, could not last long before the brighter lights of the truth, which no one, however malicious, can hide.

AL-BA'TH adds: The lights of the truth are shining from several sources. The most important is the light of the intifadah, which is sacrificing blood as a price for freedom from the occupation. Another source of the lights of the truth is the first serious peace initiative accepted by Syria. The whole world, which looks forward to stability in this region, has also accepted this initiative. The two-year-old initiative still stands. It lights the path toward a just and comprehensive peace. Israel has tried to becloud this initiative through a variety of techniques, using deception and maneuvers. This formula, however, cannot be bypassed or disregarded. Any peace based on partial solutions and separate agreements is not destined to survive, since such a peace would perpetuate occupation and impose surrender on the Arabs.

AL-BA'TH adds: Pursuing a policy that seeks to handle each party alone would only reflect negatively on the peace process and the Palestine question. It has been proven that resisting occupation with one stone is a thousand times better than surrendering and submitting to the conditions of occupation. There is a great difference between the heroes and those who have surrendered and disregarded the blood of the martyrs and sold it very cheaply.

AL-BA'TH concludes: As we prepare for a new year and after the intifadah's inauguration of its seventh year, we pin high hopes on those heroes who make victory through their sacrifices and who defeat all plans of surrender.

'Positive' Results of Christopher Tour Viewed

JN1712100693 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0545 GMT 17 Dec 93

[From the press review]

[Text] In an opinion column, AL-THAWRAH notes the positive results of the U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher's recent Middle East tour. For that, the paper credits Syria's responsiveness to efforts to unblock the peace process and lead it to its destination. Nevertheless, Israel has yet to make a single gesture that could move the peace process forward. Observers of official Israeli rhetoric and positions on the peace process and a fair and comprehensive peace will readily admit that Israel persists in its deception and maneuvers, and that it continues to shirk the requirements of a comprehensive peace. Israel thus imagines that it may be able to set for the Arabs the trap of capitulation, and in the end emerge as the victor and win both the occupied territory and peace. Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin has sought to peddle the Gaza-Jericho accord as the ultimate peace and skip a solution on the Syrian and Lebanese fronts, thus skirting a fair and comprehensive peace.

AL-THAWRAH adds: The ambiguity and restrictions of the Gaza-Jericho accord, coupled with widespread Palestinian and other Arab opposition, shows that Israel is bent on pursuing separate deals, futile as these are. The peace process cannot hold up unless Israel displays a readiness to be bound by the bases on which it was launched.

AL-THAWRAH concludes by saying: The peace process was launched on clear principles inspired by UN Security Council Resolutions 242, 338, and 425. When Israel and the signers of the Oslo accord veered from these principles, the peace process itself went off course. Consequently, the peace process cannot possibly make any progress before it is rerouted to its natural and original course, and that is the Madrid formula.

Commentary Stresses Israeli Withdrawal

JN1712153393 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1230 GMT 17 Dec 93

[Station commentary]

[Text] Gentlemen: President Hafiz al-Asad has assured a visiting U.S. Congressional delegation that Syria adheres to the peace process and the objective of a just and comprehensive peace in the Middle East. Anyone recalling the events of past years will easily discover that since the 1970's, President Hafiz al-Asad has called for just and comprehensive peace and has defined the concepts of justice and comprehensiveness. A just peace is the one that ends Israel's occupation of Arab territories and eradicates regional roots of injustice and oppression by restoring the Palestinian people's rights. Comprehensive peace is that which prevails on all fronts. The conflict with Israel is an Arab one. Consequently, peace should deal with the various aspects of the conflict and restore rights and lands to their owners.

Syria has never stopped calling for a just and comprehensive peace. But, it did not obtain the required response from the international community until the United States launched its peace initiative in order to prove it was serious and that it would no longer deal with the Arab region through the policy of double standards. While Israel placed obstacles before the U.S. initiative

and tried, through Yitzhaq Shamir, to destroy the initiative by directly rejecting its content and stressing that it would not return one inch of occupied Arab territory, Syria was eager to facilitate the mission of the head of the U.S. diplomacy at that time, James Baker. As a result of Syria's honest cooperation, the Madrid peace conference was held and the Washington talks began. The Shamir government was brought down and the Rabin government replaced it, but peace hopes remained sheer hopes. Israel's intransigence changed only in form. Israel continued its old, but new, policy of building settlements and Judaizing the occupied territories. All Arab initiatives, including the Syrian document of proposals, have failed to push Israel toward a just and comprehensive peace. Therefore, the Washington talks have been subject to shocks, although Syria responded to every U.S. effort to revive the talks and end the stalemate.

At the end of his recent tour of the Middle East, U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher praised Syria's cooperation and honest desire for peace. He pinned great hope on the expected meeting between President al-Asad and President Clinton in Geneva in order to build a just and comprehensive peace in the region. Syria's endeavor to bring about a true peace no longer needs evidence. The peace march over the past two years proves Syria's honest trend and, at the same time, it exposes Israel's false position, its procrastination, its maneuvers, and its feverish attempts to circumvent the rules of the Madrid conference and the essence of the Washington talks, that is, UN Security Council Resolutions 242, 338, and 425. The Gaza-Jericho agreement is part of the framework and goal of these attempts. It has created a volatile situation in the occupied territories and destroyed the asset of the Palestinian side that signed it. Instead of peace, calm, and confidence in the future, the Palestinian people find themselves exposed to more oppression, more pursuit, and more sieges. Israel has played on words and mixed the cards throughout its presence in the region. It drew the Palestinian side into the Oslo trap after the latter departed from the principles of the pan-Arab position and the Damascus, Amman, and Beirut coordination meetings.

Israel is currently pressing the Palestinian side for new concessions in order to completely subjugate it to Zionist policies. Peace cannot be built on unilateral deals, vague words, and false and twisted promises. The whole world unanimously approved Resolutions 242, 338, and 425 as a basis for a just settlement in the Middle East. These resolutions do not allow Israel to occupy territories by force, to tamper with their cultural characteristics, and to build settlements on them. They also urge Israel to carry out an unconditional withdrawal of its forces. The land-for-peace formula was adopted by the Madrid conference and the Washington talks, but Israel wants peace and land together. As a result, peace has lost one of its major factors, justice. Peace, in Israel's view, is based on injustice, occupation, and the displacement of people.

U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher spent more than one week in the Middle East, carrying out a shuttle tour to push forward the peace march on the Syrian and Lebanese tracks, after he clearly sensed that the Gaza-Jericho agreement was foundering. He did not conceal Syria's major role in the peace process. He viewed progress on the Syrian track as basic for a successful peace process. Despite this, Israel has not given any indication that it has changed its intransigent positions. Israelis raise their voices and urge Syria not to demand the Golan, to accept a compromise, and to take foreign financial aid instead of the Golan. Israel doesn't just exercise piracy within plain sight of all the world, but it also wants Syria to abandon its land and gamble with the fate of 150,000 Golan evacuees. Meanwhile, Israel gives itself the right to expand in other people's territories by force and coercion.

These Israeli proposals cannot lead to peace. On the contrary, they will push the region to the brink of the unknown. Syria will never relinquish an inch of its national soil. It will never retreat from the formula of just and comprehensive peace that will completely end the occupation and restore all occupied territory to its rightful owner. Through its proposals and exercises, Israel is trying to undermine the peace process and all its prospects, meanwhile convincing the region's countries and peoples that Israel and peace are at odds.

Al-Hirawi Arrives for Higher Council Meeting

JN2112114393 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1115 GMT 21 Dec 93

[Excerpts] Lebanese President Ilyas al-Hirawi arrived in Damascus at 1100 today to attend the meeting of the Higher Syrian-Lebanese Council. Leading those who welcomed him at Damascus' western entrance was President Hafiz al-Asad. [passage omitted]

As soon as the two presidents arrived at the People's Palace, the Higher Council held a meeting. Attending the meeting on the Syrian side were People's Assembly Speaker 'Abd-al-Qadir Qaddurah, Prime Minister Mahmud al-Zu'bi, and Dr. Salim Yasin, deputy prime minister for economic affairs. On the Lebanese side the meeting was attended by Chamber of Deputies Speaker Nabih Birri, Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri, and Deputy Prime Minister Michel al-Murr. The meeting was also attended by Nasri Khuri, secretary general of the Higher Council.

Al-Asad Receives Council Chief

JN2012165893 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1615 GMT 20 Dec 93

[Text] President Hafiz al-Asad received at 1730 today Nasri Khuri, the secretary general of the Higher Syrian-Lebanese Council.

Ex-Yemeni Minister's Nephew Committed Suicide

PM2112100293 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 18 Dec 93 p 1

[Salwa al-Ustuwani report: "Syrian Interior Minister Tells AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT: 'Ali Nasir's Nephew Committed Suicide"]

[Excerpt] Damascus—Syrian Interior Minister Dr. Muhammad Harbah has announced that the investigations conducted by the competent security quarters have proved that the death of Hadi Ahmad Nasir Muhammad, nephew of former Yemeni Pesident 'Ali Nasir Muhammad, was caused by suicide, as he used his own pistol, and that there is no crime behind the incident.

Replying to reports carries by media services about the circumstances that surrounded the Yemeni young man's death, the Syrian interior minister said in a statement to AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT that the medical, criminal, and security inquires and investigations conducted by Syrian security authorities have ascertained the suicide, and that all the investigations and documents were sent with the body to Yemen yesterday. He added that former President 'Ali Nasir Muhammad has been informed of this reality. [passage omitted]

PKK's Ocalan Said Detained, To Be Given to Turkey

NC1612161093 (Clandestine) Voice of Iraqi People in Arabic 1500 GMT 16 Dec 93

[Text] Reports in Turkey said today that Syria has arrested Abdullah Ocalan, head of the Turkish Kurdistan Workers Party [PKK], and that it will hand him over to Turkey. The Turkish newspaper YENI GUNAYDIN said the Syrian secret police arrested Ocalan on the orders of Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad. It noted that the Syrian authorities rejected a request submitted by the head of the above-mentioned party to discuss political asylum in France. It is worth noting that the Turkish Government is applying pressure on Syria to stop its support for the PKK, which has entered into a war with the Turkish forces demanding autonomy in southeastern Turkey. This has so far led to the death of 10,000 [words indistinct].

Afghanistan

Renewed Clashes Between Mas'ud, Hekmatyar Forces

LD2112115193 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 21 Dec 93

[Text] Reporting from Kabul, the Voice and Vision's correspondent has said that severe fighting between the forces of Ahmad Shah Mas'ud, the former defense minister, and [Golboddin] Hekmatyar's Hezb-e Eslami [Islamic Party] has disturbed the peace in Kabul once again.

The Hezb-e Eslami has announced that Defense Ministry fighter planes, under the command of Ahmad Shah Mas'ud, have bombed the area around a power station 40 km east of Kabul. Afghan Defense Ministry sources have denied this information. Afghan Defense Ministry sources have, for their part, reported clashes southwest of Kabul. They state that the forces of the Shura-ye Nezar [Supervisory Council] have thwarted an attack by the [Hezb-e] Eslami forces and driven them back.

India

Minister on Talks With Pakistan, Ties With U.S.

BK1712145393 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1430 GMT 17 Dec 93

[Text] India has expressed the hope that the foreign secretary-level talks with Pakistan in the first week of next month will be successful and lead to a movement forward. Addressing the Consultative Committee Meeting of members of parliament attached to his ministry, the minister of state for external affairs, Mr. R.L. Bhatia, described as untrue the observation that the Simla agreement has not been functional. Mr. Bhatia reiterated India's total commitment to human rights and stated that the Human Rights Commission Bill has been introduced in parliament.

Regarding declaration of Pakistan as a terrorist state, Mr. Bhatia said that all requisite evidence available with India has been passed on to the United States. The U.S. has not taken the final step for its own reasons.

On Indo-U.S. relations, Mr. Bhatia allayed the apprehensions of the members and asserted that New Delhi will not compromise country's sovereignty and its independent position under pressure. He said India has explained its point of view frequently in detail and will continue to do so. He also said India's position on nonproliferation is very clear and based on sound and fundamental principles.

'Threat' From PRC-Pakistan Arms Pact Analyzed

BK2112102993 Delhi THE HINDUSTAN TIMES in English 7 Dec 93 p 12

[By M.K. Dhar]

[Text] New Delhi, Dec. 6— The signing of a credit agreement by Pakistan with China yesterday to finance arms purchases and the likelihood of its being let off the Pressler hook, is expected to increase Islamabad's offensive capability as also threat to India.

Although Pakistan and China have had a long-standing defence relationship extending to the nuclear field as well, induction of more arms, diplomatic observers here fear, may tilt the regional balance and force India to increase arms purchases to protect its security and national sovereignty.

The Government of India has, from time to time, drawn the attention of countries supplying arms to Pakistan on concessional terms that acquisition of huge arms supplies—partly under the pretext of arming the Afghan Mujahideen—has only increased Islamabad's capacity to destabilise India through interference in its internal affairs by arming terrorists.

Even though Beijing insists that it follows strict criteria with regard to arms sales, these do not seem to have been observed in the case of Pakistan. With sales to the tune of nearly 8 billion U.S. dollars last year, China was the fifth largest arms supplier in the world.

The three principles are: export of weapons must help countries raise their own defence capabilities; it must not harm regional peace, security and stability; and the arms sales must not be used to interfere in the internal affairs of others. On all the three counts, Chinese arms transfer to Pakistan would not be justified.

Observers here have also noted the recent CIA testimony before the U.S. Senate Committee on Government Affairs says that Beijing "prior to joining the NPT [Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty] in 1992, probably provided some nuclear weapon-related assistance to Islamabad that may have included training and equipment. Based on China's long standing nuclear links with Islamabad, it is unclear whether Beijing has broken off contact with elements associated with Pakistan's weapons programme."

Earlier, intelligence sources in the West had claimed that China provided uranium for enrichment, confirmed Pakistani designs for nuclear weapons and may have allowed Islamabad to test a nuclear device on Chinese territory.

The progress Pakistan has made with Chinese help in missile development including training in Saudi Arabia with the Chinese CSS-2 Intermediate Range Ballistic Missiles (IRBM) about which the U.S. has raised no objection, points to a potential for missiles with nuclear capability in Pakistan.

China and Pakistan signed in 1990 a ten-year memorandum of understanding on defence matters, including cooperation in such areas as weapons procurement, production, research and development and technology transfer. With U.S. military assistance to Pakistan stopped since last two years, China's continued prominence as a weapons supplier to Pakistan has been assured.

The Chinese arms transfers comprise tanks, armoured personnel carriers, small arms, ammunition, fighters, naval ships and missiles and missile technology. Though the deals were termed commercial, the concessional element was predominant in such sales.

The transfers to Pakistan include over 1500 tanks, 400 jet fighters including F-5, F-6, F-7 and Q-5 besides MiGs and Il-28s and 40 naval ships. China has also helped Pakistan in building aircraft refitting factories and is working on the joint production of the jet trainer, the Karakoram-8.

Partnership, Development Accord Signed With EC

BK2012160493 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 20 Dec 93

[Text] India and the European Community [EC] have signed an agreement on partnership and development. The agreement was signed in Brussels today by the commerce minister, Mr. Pranab Mukherjee, and Mr. Manuel Marin, EC commissioner for developing countries. The agreement is aimed at developing a closer and upgraded relationship through dialogue. In a joint statement issued after the signing of the agreement, the two sides expressed their resolution to intensify their mutual relations in the political, economic, technological, and cultural fields. They will emphasize their common attachment to democracy and respect for human rights and their commitment to safeguarding peace and establishing a just and stable international order in accordance with the UN Charter. The political dialogue will take place through ministerial-level meetings between India and the European Union troika comprising Denmark, Belgium, and Greece.

CPI-M Not To Support Censure Motion Over GATT

BK2012155493 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 20 Dec 93

[Text] The CPI-M [Communist Party of India-Marxist] will not support any BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] sponsored censure motion in Parliament against the Narasimha Rao government on the GATT deal. This was stated by the party general secretary, Mr. Harkishan Singh Surjit, in Calcutta today while briefing newspersons on the three-day meeting of the CPI-M Central Committee which ended yesterday. At the same time, Mr. Surjit said the CPI-M is against what he called the Center's policy of mortgaging the country's economy to the World Bank and the IMF.

BJP Ends Boycott as Leaders Released

BK2012124893 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1230 GMT 20 Dec 93

[Text] A UNI report says all BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] leaders in judicial custody in connection with Ayodhya [mosque] demolition case have been released. The special court dealing with the case issued the orders in Lucknow today.

The BJP has ended its boycott of parliament with the party members attending the proceedings in both houses this morning. Last week, the BJP members did not attend the houses in protest against the detention of some party leaders in connection with the Ayodhya demolition case.

Prompt Reporting Demanded on 'Custodial Deaths'

BK1812053493 Delhi Doordarshan Television Network in English 1615 GMT 17 Dec 93

[Text] The Human Rights Commission has expressed grave concern over the incidents of custodial deaths. The commission has directed all District Magistrates and Superintendents of Police to report to the commission within 24 hours of the happening of any custodial incident. The commission in a recent order said failure to do so will be considered an attempt to suppress the incident.

Bill on Protection of Human Rights Passed

BK1812085493 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0830 GMT 18 Dec 93

[Text] The Lok Sabha today unanimously passed the Protection of Human Rights Bill 1993. The bill was reintroduced after incorporating suggestions by the Parliamentary Standing Committee. It was passed by a voice vote after adopting some amendments. The bill seeks to replace an ordinance issued earlier for setting up a national human rights commission.

Replying to the debate on the bill, the home minister, Mr. S.B. Chavan, said the commission is a high-powered body and its recommendations will be implemented by the government sincerely. Describing the move as a new measure, he said adequate representation has been ensured for minorities, women, and other sections of the community. He said the states will be allowed to set up their own commissions to look into the violation of human rights. Replying to the suggestions to include the armed forces within the purview of the commission, he said the armed forces are covered under other act for any act of omission and commission.

Proposed Human Rights Commission Viewed

BK2012123393 Delhi All India Radio General Overseas Service in English 1010 GMT 20 Dec 93

[Commentary by T. Jayaraj]

[Text] The adoption of the Protection of Human Rights Bill 1993—the first of its kind in India—by the Lok Sabha reflects the concern of the government for human rights in the country. It is a timely step intended to defuse the climate of hostility built up by internal and external forces about the human rights issues. The bill provides for the setting up of a National Human Rights Commission and similar commissions in the states as well as human right courts. The eight-member national commission—to be headed by a retired chief justice of India—will inquire suo moto on a petition by a victim or any person on his behalf into the violation of human rights or abetment thereof. It will also have the powers to go into negligence in the prevention of such violation by a public servant. The inclusion of the chairperson of the National Commission for Minorities, Scheduled Castes and Tribes, and Women in the National Human Rights Commission is aimed at widening its scope and help it solve social problems like violence against women, minorities, and backwards.

Although the recommendations of the commission are not mandatory, it would be difficult for any government to brush them aside. The passing of the human rights bill does not necessarily suggest that the country's record of maintaining human rights is low. Neither does it imply any denial of excesses of the law enforcement agencies. Whenever officers and men of police and armed forces were charged with excess with substantial evidence, punishment have been awarded.

Human rights are not different from the rights guaranteed by the Constitution, the laws of the land, or the rights sanctified by customs and usage. The rights are based on and are proportionate to the discharge of duties and responsibilities. The voice of human rights activists; the pressure of international bodies, such as Amnesty International; and the U.S. influence as a self-appointed champion of human rights actually forms our vision, distorts our outlook and understanding of human rights issue, and raps our sense of values.

Democratic societies are threatened by violence committed by secessionists, terrorists, fundamentalists, drug mafias, smugglers, and criminals. The indiscriminate killing of innocent people by terrorists and militants in the Kashmir Valley and Punjab were classic instances of violation of human rights. The killing of innocent citizens by organized terrorists failed to invite even minimum condemnation abroad.

Ironically, no hue and cry was raised when terrorists aided from across the border turned the Golden Temple of India in Amritsar into a fortress with sophisticated arms and ammunition. One wonders whether the champions of civil rights know how they are undermining their own credibility. The attitude toward terrorists funded, trained, and armed by ISI [Inter Service Intelligence] of Pakistan to undermine India's territorial integrity can at best be described as mysterious.

Civil liberties have a crucial place in a democracy. Equally, terrorism has no place in it. On terrorism, the India-British extradition treaty has proved to be a pragmatic approach. Terrorists could no longer will be able to take shelter behind the defense of political persecution. That is, they cannot avoid extradition by (?saying) political persecution in India and that their offense was political in nature. The remarks of Lord Templemen are worthy of recalling here: Human rights have always been upheld by judicial decisions in India. A series of outstanding judgments in India have secured worldwide recognition and respect.

According to available statistics, during the past 10 years in Punjab 12,000 civilians and 1,700 police personnel have been killed by terrorists. In Kashmir over the past four years 5,500 people have been killed by terrorists. There have been 1,500 cases of arson and 2,500 bomb attacks. These are serious threats to national integrity, national security, stability, and harmony of any country. These have brought to surface very complex and complicated law and order and security problems.

Ministry, Reserve Bank Faulted in Security Case

BK2112091493 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0830 GMT 21 Dec 93

[Text] The Joint Parliamentary Committee [JPC] probing the security scandal has severely indicted the Reserve Bank of India [RBI] and held the Finance Ministry responsible for the lapses. In its report tabled in both the house of Parliament today, the committee said the Finance Ministry failed to anticipate and respond to it purposefully when it surfaced. The two-volume report said the Finance Ministry also did not manage adequately the consequences of the fraud committed by a host of agencies and punish the guilty on time. The committee said the RBI was not assertive enough in dealing with the foreign banks. It said the RBI turned a blind eye to the massive irregularities. It fixed primary responsibility on the deputy governor, Mr. Amitabh Ghosh, and said the RBI governor must be held no less responsible. Expressing the view that the irregularities have been building up since the mid-eighties, the JPC said the banker receipt system was considerably misused. The vigilant system in banks also functioned in a totally unsatisfactory manner, the report added. The details of the report are still coming in.

The report was tabled in the Lok Sabha by the chairman of the committee, Mr. Ram Niwas Mirdha. A copy of the report was presented in the Rajya Sabha by the committee member, Mr. S.S. Ahluwalia. The 30-member committee was set up about 15 months ago to inquire into the country's biggest financial fraud involving about 5,000 crore rupees. Notes given by both the ruling party and opposition members on issues not covered in the

report have also been appended to the main report. These issues include the 1 crore rupees payoff allegation.

Foreign Investment Proposals Approved

BK2112033493 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0245 GMT 21 Dec 93

[Text] There has been a sharp upswing in the inflow of foreign investments to the country. An official release issued in New Delhi yesterday said that the center has approved foreign investment proposals worth 6,580 crore rupees in the first 10 months of this year against 530 crore rupees for the whole of 1991 and 3,880 crore rupees in 1992. The release said that there has been a significant increase in investment proposals from the United States, Britain, Germany, Japan, Switzerland, Netherlands, France, and Singapore. More than 90 percent of the investment has gone to the high priority areas. Similarly, the release said that the NRI [Nonresident Indian] investments rose from less than 20 crore rupees in 1991 to 439 crores in 1992 and 665 crore rupees during the first 10 months of this year.

15 Soldiers Killed in Ambush by 'Militants'

BK2012155893 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 20 Dec 93

[Text] A PTI report from Kohima says 15 Army personnel, including a colonel, were killed and five others injured when their envoy was ambushed by suspected militants in Mokokchung District today. Official sources said the incident occurred near a (?coco) bridge, about 20 km from Mokokchung town, around 0800 this morning. The Army personnel returned the fire killing one of the attackers.

Iran

Libya Urged To Join New 'Strategic Alliance'

PM2112102093 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 18 Dec 93 p 4

[Unattributed report: "In Message From Hashemi-Rafsanjani to al-Qadhdhafi, Iran Urges Libya To Join New Strategic Alliance"]

[Text] Tripoli, London, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT—Iran has urged Libya to join a new strategic alliance to abort the agreements concluded between the PLO and Israel and to confront what it terms "U.S. conspiracies," Iranian and Arab sources said yesterday.

The Iranian invitation came in a message sent by Iranian President Hashemi-Rafsanjani to Libyan President Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi.

Iranian Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati arrived in Tripoli late at night the day before yesterday to deliver Rafsanjani's message to the Libyan president and to hold talks with him and with other senior Libyan leaders.

According to Western sources, Iran has decided to pursue an effective foreign policy designed to set up a new bloc of states which—for one reason or another—have conflicting relations with the United States and its allies.

The new Iranian policy aims to achieve four objectives: Toughening the policies of the OPEC states in order to contain the slump in oil prices; reactivating the Nonaligned Movement with the help of Cuba and North Korea; reinforcing the front resisting the agreements between the PLO and Israel; and toughening the Islamic Conference Organization's position on the Jerusalem issue.

Tehran believes that Tripoli can play a vital role at these four levels. Velayati emphasized Iran's support for Libya during his meeting in Tripoli with Libyan Foreign Minister 'Umar Mustafa al-Muntasir.

Velayati told the Libyan minister that Libya is entitled to reject Western demands for the handover of its two citizens suspected of planning the Lockerbie disaster.

Iran expressed its willingness to supply Libya with the equipment and spare parts it needs for its oil industry, defying sanctions imposed by the UN Security Council. Iran is also willing to replace Western technicians, who could pull out of Libya under recent sanctions, with Iranian technicians.

Iran was last week behind a plan to set up a "unified front" of Palestinian groups opposed to the Palestinian-Israeli agreement.

Now Tehran is hoping that Libya will allow the "rejectionist" forces to set up an alternative headquarters in Libya.

Observers believe that the Iranian initiative is a move planned by policymakers in Tehran, as they fear the possibility that Syria might become a full party to the peace process after the upcoming summit between Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad and U.S. President Bill Clinton. Because in such a case, Syria could be forced to tell the "rejectionist" forces to move their offices from Damascus.

Moving these offices to Iran would be difficult politically, as Arab public opinion could reject it, on the grounds that Iran is not Arab. Thus Tripoli is the ideal alternative to host these forces' offices.

Iran, it seems, is hoping that other Arab and Islamic states will in the future support a "nucleus for a resistance movement" against the agreements, since Sudan has good relations with Iran, and Iraq has announced its opposition to the Palestinian-Israeli agreement.

Over recent months Tehran and Tripoli have openly called on China to fill the vacuum resulting from the breakup of the Soviet Union. Iranian policymakers believe that China can play such a role within the Nonaligned Movement framework.

Iranian policy planners also believe that the Nonaligned Movement can make it politically difficult for the United States and its allies to threaten military intervention against states like North Korea, Libya, and Iran.

Moroccan Minister Arrives To Discuss Ties

LD2112063693 Tehran IRNA in English 0613 GMT 21 Dec 93

[Text] Tehran, Dec. 21, IRNA—Moroccan Foreign Minister Abdellatif Filali arrived here Tuesday [21 December] morning on an official two-day visit to discuss promotion of bilateral ties.

He was greeted at the airport by Deputy Foreign Minister for Arab-African Affairs Hoseyn Shaykhholeslam.

Filali said the objective of his visit is to discuss strengthening of bilateral ties between the two Muslim countries and exchange views on regional and internatinal developments in his meeting with his Iranian counterpart 'Ali Akbar Velayati.

Discusses Regional Issues With Velayati

LD2112115293 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 21 Dec 93

[Text] At this morning's meeting between Abdellatif Filali, Morocco's minister of state for foreign affairs, and Mr. Velayati, our country's foreign minister, issues of interest to both countries concerning bilateral relations and matters related to the world of Islam and the international community, were reviewed.

At the meeting, Abdellatif Filali expressed delight at his delegation's visit to Tehran. He called for stronger friendship and cooperation with the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Mr. Velayati, for his part, considered that historical relations and the two Muslim nations' common religious heritage were important for strengthening mutual links and interests. He emphasized: There are no restrictions, as far as we are concerned, for widening relations in various dimensions with Morocco.

Velayati pointed out that the Islamic Republic of Iran places importance on its relations with Islamic countries. He termed as positive relations between our country and countries of the Persian Gulf littoral. He considered that existing ambiguities [ebhamat] in relations between Iran and the UAE, were resolvable—within the framework of friendly talks and on the basis of the 1971 agreement—as the criteria acceptable to both sides.

The foreign minister of Morocco also said: By strengthening their relations Islamic countries can resolve their problems by themselves and not create any opportunities for non-Muslim countries to take advantage.

He add: The Abu Musa issue is not a big problem either for the Islamic Republic of Iran or the UAE. Bearing in mind the Islamic Republic of Iran's good relations with the countries of the Persian Gulf littorals, it is resolvable.

At the meeting, the foreign ministers of the two countries considered that exchanging views and various delegations between the two countries was a turning point for widening relations between the two nations and expanding regional cooperation.

Commentary Views Cooperation With Turkey

LD2012152793 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1105 GMT 20 Dec 93

[Unattributed commentary]

[Text] First Vice President Habibi left for Turkey today for a two-day official visit. A high-ranking delegation, comprising the ministers of transport and heavy industries, accompanied Mr. Habibi on the trip.

The two sides will discuss and decide on issues concerning transportation, border security, and economic, regional, and international issues of mutual interest.

Relations between Iran and Turkey have not always been on the same level since the Islamic revolution of Iran, but have had a constructive trend on the whole. Cultural, transportation, and goods' transit agreements, border markets, and security agreements and preventing the infiltration of undesirable elements into the borders of the two sides are among the most important areas of cooperation between the two countries. Iran and Turkey have 511 km of common borders.

At the seventh session of the joint security committee of the two countries, which was held in Ankara this month, the two sides reached important agreements. On that basis it was stressed that each side will not permit any illegal activities inside its territory which may be harmful to the internal security of the other side, and on the discovery of terrorist positions or camps inside its territory it will take military action against them.

It should be pointed out that the Iran-Turkey security cooperation committee held seven sessions last year, as a result of which outstanding progress has been made. The two neighbor countries, Iran and Turkey, are the main founders of the regional Economic Cooperation Organization, ECO. They also participate, and cooperate with each other, in the Islamic Conference Organization.

Although the level of trade has fallen because of problems arising over the past few months, from an economic standpoint the two countries have suitable bases for deepening the expansion of cooperation.

The Iranian-Turkish joint economic committee, which is in fact the axis around which relations between the two sides revolve every year, is held in Ankara and Tehran alternately. The committee can also discuss and remove obstacles in the way of the expansion of cooperation.

The situation in the Middle East and the developments in the world community require good Tehran-Ankara relations. Therefore, more than ever, the authorities of the two countries should strive to ensure the interests of the peoples of the two countries and of the region.

'Repentant' MKO Members Return To Tehran

LD1812132393 Tehran IRNA in English 1222 GMT 18 Dec 93

[Text] Tehran, Dec. 18, IRNA—A group of 24 repentant members and advocates of the terrorist Mojahedin Khalq Organization (MKO), based in the United Arab Emirates, returned home Saturday [20 December] after expressing regret for their past wrongdoings, at the Iranian embassy in Abu Dhabi.

The group arrived in Tehran by an Iran air flight to reunite with their families after staying away from home for many years.

Among the penitents were those who had spent more than 10 years in Iraq, European countries or the UAE.

Mohammad Eivazi, a repentant, thanked Iran for receiving them saying that they had started a new life.

Eivazi, who spent four years in Iraq alongside the MKO forces, said that presently the MKO members had reached a dead end and would certainly be unable to stand against the huge number of those who have renounced the organization.

According to him, the terrorist organization has launched massive propaganda discouraging the repentants from contacting the Iranian embassies abroad. "We are happy to be back to the nation's fold. We were wrong in fearing (tough) reaction of the Islamic Republic towards the MKO supporters. However, today we acknowledge that we have made a grave mistake and we pray to the Almighty God to avail us the opportunity to redress our past mistakes," he said.

He expressed regret that he had collaborated with the enemy during the 1980-88 Iraq-Iran war. "In Iraq, we were witness to the MKO's spying for Iraq in exchange for arms and to the organization's political and moral corruption. It was from this point where the members and supporters started to renounce the organization but that the MKO's institutional rules and the prevailing state of horror in Iraq did not let us flee the country."

He said he had managed to escape Iraq via Jordan nine months ago and contacted the Iranian embassy where he was received warmly by the embassy staff who issued him an Iranian passport.

He urged all penitents to report to the Iranian embassies and make preparations for their return home and reunion with their families as soon as possible.

Another penitent, Kamal Mohammadi, 32, also expressed gratitude to Iran saying that he hoped to compensate for his past mistakes by serving the Iranian nation and system.

Mohammadi who has witnessed the regretful situation of those members who have renounced the MKO and are now under detention in "Ramadiah" camp and other MKO prisons in Iraq, said that hundreds of them were under severe psychological and physical pressure and wished to return to Iran soon.

He called on the international organizations to dispatch delegations to Iraq, particularly to the areas under the MKO control and contact the MKO repentant members and help them get out of Iraq.

He said that the MKO has now turned into an absolutely Iraqi establishment and that even the senior MKO members are against the situation and wish to get out of Iraq.

'Repentant' Member Comments on MKO

LD1912134293 Tehran IRNA in English 1237 GMT 19 Dec 93

[Text] Tehran, Dec. 19, IRNA—A group of former advocates of the terrorist Mujahideen Khalq Organization (MKO) has called on international bodies and the United Nations in particular to dispatch a delegation to Iraq to release repentant MKO members being kept in Iraqi jails by the grouplet.

The group of 24 returned home from Dubai after being away from the country for years and were warmly welcomed by the Iranian Muslim nation.

Rostam Hojatti, 28, who has worked for the MKO since 1984 and witnessed its espionage activities in Iraq, told IRNA they were happy to have been forgiven by the Iranian people and Islamic government.

He said about 700 MKO members, including some top level ones, have been moved to horrible MKO prisons in Iraq and tortured physically and mentally after disputes emerged between them and the organization.

He remarked that a horrible police system was ruling over the organization, adding that the members were not permitted to voice the slightest objection.

He noted that the MKO was plagued with an "identity crisis" and many regretted the years they have wasted with the organization without any motive.

Hojatti reiterated that a large number of the MKO advocates were against spying for Saddam and the West, as well as opposed to attacks on border villagers. Problems of this kind were constantly emerging within the organization and "I can say that it has reached the end of the line."

The repentant MKO member voiced readiness of the organization's ex-supporters to provide any international judiciary source with sufficient valid documents on the crimes perpetrated by its ringleaders.

He urged the Iranians who have left the country illegally and were now living abroad to report to Iranian embassies and consulates to arrange for their return home.

Hojatti left Iraq for Sweden 7 months ago and then went to the UAE to return to Iran.

Hundreds of Iranians in Europe, America and Asia reported to Iran's embassies and returned home last year after the Iranian Foreign Ministry decided to provide facilities for those without passports.

Later, some of them again left the country to continue their work or education with official documents and passports.

Iraq Reportedly Holds Kidnapped Families

LD2012200793 Tehran IRNA in English 1935 GMT 20 Dec 93

[Text] Dezful (Khuzestan), Dec. 20, IRNA—Iraq is holding scores of Iranian families which it kidnapped during the early years of its aggression (1980-88), disclosed a group of exhausted Iranian detainees which crossed home into Iran today after escaping from the Dojaila camp in Kut Province.

Hassan Sikkini a resident of Qajariyeh village in the suburbs of Khorramshahr who managed to escape the camp along with 25 others last week said Iraqi forces had kidnapped him and his family at the outset of their 8-year aggression on Islamic Iran (1980-88).

Sikkini said that at first the Iraqis kept them in Su'eb near Basrah and then transferred them to Tabirah near al-Amarah. He added that they were taken to Dojaila camp after floods occurred in 1986.

He said the detainees at the camp are given their meagre rations such as flour, rice, vegetable oil and tea every forty days.

According to Sikkini, only once during their 13-year detention in Iraq, United Nations representatives offered the Iranians sugar and flour, but soon Iraqi agents prevented any kind of contact between the Iranian detainees and UN officials.

He regretted that the UN officials had promised to register names of those willing to return home but did nothing in this regard.

It is worth noting that Kuwait also claims that Iraq is holding scores of its nationals whom Ba'thist forces kidnapped during their shortlived occupation of the emirate in 1990-91.

Call for Talks in Tajikistan Viewed

NC1812070593 Tehran ABRAR in Persian 13 Dec 93 p 12

[Commentary by Hasan Fathi: "Tajikistan: A Logical But Insufficient Decision"]

[Text] Incoming reports from Tajikistan are encouraging, to a certain extent. And if the new pace of developments continues, the situation in the Republic is expected to improve.

Imamali Rakhmanov, chairman of Tajikistan's Supreme Soviet, has expressed his readiness for talks with opposing groups. He has said that he is ready to hold talks only within the framework of secular rule and that he will not discuss an Islamic rule with anyone.

Meanwhile, Tajikistan's deputy speaker has said that he agrees to the Supreme Soviet membership of representatives of opposition groups based in Moscow.

While the Tajik Government is showing its goodwill, major opposition figures based in Afghanistan have described the visit by an official Tajik delegation to Moscow as a proof of the delegation's insincerity as far as a peaceful solution of the problem in the Republic is concerned.

It is an undeniable reality that Imamali Rakhmanov's government in Tajikistan is under pressure. But Russia's political, economic, and arms assistance has been unable to save Tajikistan from its problems because the opposition enjoys considerable power and has been able to obstruct the government, which consists of former communists who have come to power with Moscow's help and support.

The government's inability to overcome the opposition led to the Russians' official and overt military intervention in that country. But even their military intervention was unable to solve the problems, and a large number of Russian servicemen were killed in battles on the Tajik-Afghan border.

Since these battles, which further manifested the government's incapability, Imamali Rakhmanov has called for talks with the opposition. But it is interesting to note that he has ignored the largest opposition group, which is based in Afghanistan and which has Islamic inclinations.

The move initiated by the Tajik Government will probably draw the attention of certain opposition groups based in Moscow. But surely it will not be able to draw the attention of all the opposition groups and put things in order. Ignoring the largest opposition group will only result in its continued opposition and more battles in Badakhshan Province and other areas along the border with Afghanistan.

If Rakhmanov's government wants to overcome the problems and restore peace in the country, the best thing

for him to do is to agree to direct and constructive talks with all the groups involved and to give them a share of power, as well.

The 70 years of experience under communist rule has made it clear that monopolizing power cannot solve problems and only severs the links between the people and the officials and results in the decline of power. In order to avoid this situation, everyone should be encouraged to participate and to help with reconstruction. However, one cannot be very optimistic about the changes that are taking place in Tajikistan, given the attitudes of Moscow and Rakhmanov's government. But the change in policy can be considered a good omen and a sign of hope that this decision will pave the way for comprehensive negotiations with all the opposing groups.

Russian, Western Aims in Central Asia Viewed

NC1712212293 Tehran ABRAR in Persian 7 Dec 93 p 12

[Commentary by Ruzbeh Buolhari: "Russia: Striving To Play a Key Role in Central Asia"]

[Text] Last week, the CSCE supported the formation of a Russian peacekeeping force in the CIS. Meanwhile, Russian officials have also called for the formation of a rapid-deployment force that can safeguard the security of the Russians in CIS member-countries. Thus, as foreseen, Moscow is exploiting pretexts such as safeguarding the security of Russians and ensuring its national interests in order to play a key role in the CIS member-countries.

Meanwhile, one of the areas on which the Russians have focused their attention is Central Asia. For example, recently, countries like Kyrgyzstan, which had close relations with Moscow in the past, have been facing differences on economic matters with Russia—differences that led to Kyrgyzstan's decision to circulate its own currency. Even though this can be considered a new step toward the consolidation of Kyrgyzstan's independence, in view of the extensive political-economic dependency that Central Asian countries have on Moscow, it is doubtful if it will be accepted. Although the wish for decentralization in these countries has always existed, the considerable and special role that was played by the Russians in the economic, political, and military management in the Central Asian republics is one of the major elements that is helping Moscow to establish its influence there.

This, coupled with the interest shown by Boris Yeltsin's government to play a key role in the CIS, is considered positive by the West in the short run. In view of the possibility of a big surge in nationalistic and Islamic sentiments, the potential grounds for conflict among the Central Asian republics, and the policy of building a dam in front of the Islamic Republic of Iran, the West wants Russia to undertake the political management of the region at this juncture. Of course, the wishes of Moscow's hegemonists is a serious obstacle to the West's role in this region; and thus the Western countries and especially America and Britain have resorted to the policy of economic investments in Central Asia and are thus pursuing a long-term policy of infiltration in the area.

Meanwhile, the increasing strength of Russia's military and security forces in state decisionmaking processes have fanned the flames of Moscow's expansionist wishes. Under such conditions, Boris Yeltsin—who owes his existence to these forces—has to take into consideration their views, which is nothing but the revival of the Soviet Union under another name. Within this context, one can foresee that an extensive security system will be created in the CIS in the near future, which will intensify the CIS members' dependence on Moscow and will act as a sub-branch of NATO. Thus, the West will have a good enough excuse to stay out of possible and potential conflicts in the region and not become involved as they did in Somalia.

Commentary Views Russian 'Levers' on Azerbaijan

NC1712155593 Tehran ABRAR in Persian 13 Dec 93 p 12

[Commentary by Ruzbeh Buolhari: "Moscow: Gaining Concessions or Overthrowing Aliyev?"]

[Text] Former President Ayaz Mutalibov of the Republic of Azerbaijan stated recently in Moscow that he still considers himself president. He defended Baku's policy of closeness with Moscow and said that in the past Azerbaijan was always part of Russia and the Soviet Union. The remarks by Mutalibov, who is considered to be very close to Moscow, is of special significance and could mean the beginning of a Russian of pressuring the Republic of Azerbaijan, headed by Geydar Aliyev.

During this year's incidents in the Republic of Azerbaijan that led to the downfall of the People's Front, the combination of two factors was significant: On the one hand was Surat Guseynov and his forces in Gyandzha and on the other Geydar Aliyev, a veteran and prominent politician. Guseynov enjoyed Russian support, but even though he exploited the people's dissatisfaction, nevertheless it was Aliyev's alliance with him that inflicted the major blow on Abulfaz Elchibey.

At any rate, after his victory in the presidential elections, Aliyev adopted two tactics in Baku's foreign diplomacy:

1. The adoption of a policy of regional balance, within the context of which he tried to expand relations with Russia and with the Islamic Republic of Iran, to improve relations between the Republic of Azerbaijan and Turkey, and to get these countries' support for Baku in the Karabakh war.

2. Greater closeness with the CIS. After stabilizing his political position, Aliyev announced Baku's membership in the CIS. Thus, he tried to gain the support of the CIS, headed by Russia, on the Karabakh problem. This gave a special significance to Baku- Moscow relations.

Nevertheless, even though Azerbaijan acknowledges that it has close links with Russia, it disagrees with Moscow on several major issues:

—Caspian Sea oil resources: By propounding the issue of free seas in this area, Moscow intends to take the Cheraghali and Azeri oil resources out of the hands of Baku and to exploit them for its own benefit. This is contrary to the Azeris' national interests.

—Relations between the Republic of Azerbaijan and Tehran and Ankara: These relations, which indicate the adoption of an independent policy by Baku, cannot be to the Russians' satisfaction. Within the context of this policy, the Azeris are trying to reduce their dependence on Moscow through an oil pipeline via the Islamic Republic of Iran or Turkey.

All these elements have led to Russian pressures on the Republic of Azerbaijan and the thwarting of Azerbaijan's efforts to leave Moscow's orbit, and to Moscow's resorting to the levers that it has at its disposal to keep Azerbaijan under its diktat.

Moscow's levers are: —The economic dependence of the Republic of Azerbaijan. The Soviet Union's economic system was such that all the republics depended on each other. Since the disintegration of the Soviet Union, Moscow's new rulers have exploited this situation to pressure disobedient republics.

—The existence of a Russian minority. Another lever used by Moscow is the Russian minorities living in the republics. While it acts as a necessary pretext for the Russian Government to impose its views in the areas where they live, this minority is also of importance because of the political-economic management role it plays in the republics.

—The Karabakh war. Throughout recent years, Moscow has always tried to intensify the Azeris' and the Armenians' dependence on Russia. Azerbaijan has faced instability ever since the political developments in Karabakh led to many changes on the leadership level. Therefore, as long as the Karabakh war continues, Russia will be able to use it to put pressure on Baku.

—Good relations with Surat Guseynov. These relations are such that they give them a capability to start a revolution from within the Republic of Azeraijan, if necessary. This is significant when viewed within the context of the unrest in Gynadzha, considering certain reports of contacts between Guseynov and Mutalibov.

At any rate, despite Baku's recent permission for the deployment of Russian border guards on Azerbaijan's borders with the Islamic Republic of Iran and Turkey, Aliyev continues not to enjoy much favor from the Russians. And this image can improve only if he expresses his readiness to cooperate as much as possible with Moscow.

Otherwise, the Russians will use the current problems and the levers that they have at their disposal to try to overthrow Aliyev.

The Russians want their own man—someone who will recognize their interests and will work within the framework of these interests.

Khamene'i Sends Letter to President on Economy

LD2012174093 Tehran IRNA in English 1705 GMT 20 Dec 93

[Text] Tehran, Dec. 20, IRNA—The leader of the Islamic Republic, Ayatollah Seyyed 'Ali Khamene'i, on Monday [20 December] sent a letter to President Hojjat ol-Eslam 'Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani in which he indicated the general course of the state economy with a view to surmounting economic bottlenecks, and ensuring healthy economy.

In his letter to the president, the leader said that policy-making task of the state economy for the second national development plan must take the following points into consideration:

(1) Be consistent with social equity in order to ensure that

a. Resources and national assets are appropriated ideally,

b. True income-oriented taxation is exercized,

c. The economically under privileged classes of the society (mustazaffin) are better protected by public sector and judiciary services,

d. The under-developed areas of the country and villages get a more responsive government protection in all areas and especially in employment, health, public education and cultural services,

e. Appropriate policies and devices are adopted to prevent anything that will tend to contribute to overnight amalgamation of wealth,

f. Employment opportunities are created by identifying indigenous talent and consistent with regional priority programs,

g. Social security services cover a wider segment of the population with improvement in their quality.

2. Revolutionary values are upheld and complied with for appropriating financial resources and public sector services with a view to ensuring that priority will be given to the sources that utilize those resources for the development of the nation and the promotion of revolutionary and islamic aspirations and to those who have offered big efforts for solidifying the revolution and the islamic system such as the former war combatants and members of the basij (volunteer forces).

3. National production is promoted especially in the agriculture sector and for supplying the basic needs of the society, for reducing imports of consumer items and

unnecessary commodities, for improving the quality of domesticaly-produced commodities, and for promoting non-oil exports.

4. Administrative and judiciary services are improved to ensure the carrying out of programmes consistent with the goals thereof by reducing the bulk of administration and improving its efficiency, employing competent, trustworthy and commtted executives, and by drafting necessary legislations including a monitoring system and cleansing (the administration) of such moral and ethical flaws as wasteful employment of their time, bribery, indifference about personal duties, as well as bureaucracy.

5. Social sector services are promoted, the sector encompassing such areas as public and judiciary security, national culture, poublic education, public health and medicare, higher eduation and scholarship, the envirnment and physical education.

6. Orientating all executive and 'tabligh' (propagation) operations towards a direction that will ensure growth of morality and virtues in the society, promotion of true belief, revolutionary values, human ideals, creation of order, discipline and sense of efforts towards self-seffuciency and ocntenment, and removal of wasteful expenditure and extravagance.

7. Priorities in investment on infrastructural and other projects be identified with a view to complementing the production chain for local and export purposes, and for making the nation self-sufficient on basic consumption needs, and also for completing unfinished projects and ensuring the minimum home production for defense purposes and preventing investment for projects inconsistent with those goals and which will amount to wasteful employment of capital or resources.

8. Ensure that the largest sector of the society participates in and contributes to national construction efforts, and that administrative measures for privatizing the public economic enterprises will take the following into consideration:

a. Ensure that transfer to the private sector will be promotive of the goals of the national development plan, without the device being looked upon as a goal of its own,

b. Be within the framework of the Constitution,

c. Not threaten national security or the sovereignty of Islamic and revolutionary values,

d. Not adversely affect the sovereignty of the Islamic government, or the rights of the people, or create monopolism,

e. And aim at healthy management and sound administration of the affairs.

9. Adopt necessry devices for ensuring proper and close monitoring of the (national development) plan, and prevent adoption of arbitrary personal or sectoral practices,

10. Strengthen the defense capacity of the nation as much as necessary and consistent with adopted policies,

11. Observe the following considerations in the adoption of monetary and fiscal policies:

a. Gradual abandonment of domestic loan taking,

b. Adoption of necessary devices for reviving interest-free loan system within the national banking system,

c. Facilitating the extension of credits to persons with intellectual and technical capacity,

d. Adoption of necessary devices to prevent the nation's relying on foreign loans, and striving to gradually get rid of outstanding obligations,

12. Observe the declared policies of the Islamic Republic of Iran in foreign policy.

Khamene'i Links Mass Media, Culture, Economy

LD201165293 Tehran IRNA in English 1411 GMT 20 Dec 93

[Text] Tehran, Dec. 20, IRNA—The leader of the Islamic revolution, Ayatollah 'Ali Khamene'i today underlined the importance of using mass media in a wise manner so as to improve the culture of the society.

"Cultural issues have a great impact on other issues of the country, playing a significant role in the growth and flourishment of economy," Ayatollah Khamene'i told members of the Supreme Council for cultural revolution.

The meeting took place on the occasion of the 9th anniversary of the establishment of the council which is chaired by President Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani.

Iran's 60 million population always needs, among other things, correct culture and ethics in their individual and social life and by meeting people's cultural needs, work performance and quality will be considerably improved, the leader said.

"Such a concept should be recognized and promoted in the society because more income and less consumption which is directly linked to the culture of society will make it possible to solve many economic bottlenecks," Ayatollah Khamene'i said.

The leader of the Islamic revolution urged the Supreme Council for cultural revolution to devote a major part of its efforts to improving the culture of society and providing necessary means to achieve this goal.

Elsewhere in his speech, Ayatollah Khamene'i said the presence of ulama in universities should be taken seriously because efficient theologians play a key part in solving problems of the country and neutralizing plots in various circles.

Later, President Rafsanjani briefed Ayatollah Khamene'i on the qualitative and quantitative growth in educational, research and cultural programs launched in the first five year development plan (1989-1994).

Second Five-Year Plan Outlined

LD2012163693 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 20 Dec 93

[Text] Just as you heard in the news, the bill on the second five-year plan will be presented tomorrow by President Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani to the Majles together with the budget bill for 1373 [year beginning March 1994]. We draw your attention to our correspondent's report:

[Unidentified correspondent] The government's total general budget in the second five-year plan consists of a figure equivalent to 238,538 billion rials, 122,614 billion rials of which is made up of current expenditures and 115,924 billion rials made up of development expenditures.

Mas'ud Roghani Zanjani, deputy president and head of the Plan and Budget Organization announced this news, saying that 51 percent of the government's revenues during the years covering the second five-year plan, will come from the sale of oil and 23 percent from tax revenues. The level of borrowing [esteqraz] during the length of the second year plan will remain zero.

Roghani Zanjani added that a major part of the credits of the second plan have been allocated to development projects to the extent that the share of these credits during the span of the second five year plan will reach 49 percent.

With regard to how the plan foresees oil revenues, the head of the Plan and Budget Organization said that bearing in mind the conditions prevailing in the world oil market and its price fluctuations, the second expansion plan of the country has been prepared with two alternative points of view. The first viewpoint assumes that oil revenues will improve. In the second viewpoint, the plan has been prepared on the basis of the minimum possible earnings from oil, in the event of which, parts of development plans will be scrapped from the agenda of the expansion plan.

Zanjani added that in the second plan, the social and cultural sections consisting of general and higher education, art and culture, health and physical education, have been given first priority. Second priority is related to economic infrastructures.

According to Roghani Zanjani, third priority in the second expansion plan of the country has been given to social security and payment of subsidies for essential goods and for banking facilities.

Zanjani added in this interview that in the second plan, the policy of economic adjustment [siyasat-e ta'dil-e eqtesadi] and the transference of production units to the private sector will continue. The plan also emphasizes the removal of monopolies in the bazaar and the creation of a competitive climate as a regulating mechanism for the bazaar.

Concerning the level of the country's economic growth in the next five years, the head of the Plan and Budget Organization said that if it is predicted that the level of oil revenues will drop during the length of the second five-year plan, a reduced economic growth has been forecast in the second five-year plan, which will vary in proportion to oil revenues between 5.4 percent to 5.9 percent.

Regarding the budget for 1373, he said: The government's total general budget during the coming year [starting 21 March 1994] is a figure equivalent to 33,768 billion rials, 12,614 billion rials of which is made up of the development budget, and 21,154 billion rials of which is made up of the current budget. In comparison to the 1372 budget, this means that development expenditures would rise by about 30 percent and current expenditures by 10 percent.

Deputy Criticizes Foreign Borrowing

NC1812113693 Tehran KEYHAN in Persian 9 Dec 93 p 2

[Text] The deputy of the Vali-ye Faqih in Fars Province has criticized the policy of foreign loans based on reimbursement from future oil sales.

Addressing a gathering of Friday imams, deputies, and Fars Province governors general on Tuesday [7 December], Hojjat ol- Eslam val-Moslemin Hae'ri-Shirazi said: Forging definite commitments on the basis of uncertain sources of income is not a correct policy and will prove detrimental for us.

He added: In view of the unstable nature of the international oil market, we should move toward the utilization of more reliable sources. He said: The creation of smaller employment units and greater attention to agriculture and handicrafts will resolve this problem.

Diving Maneuvers Begin in Gulf, Strait

LD1812174693 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1630 GMT 18 Dec 93

[Text] The Val-Fajr-2 joint diving maneuvers started today in the waters of the Persian Gulf and the strategic Strait of Hormuz under the command of the Khatam ol-Anbia headquarters.

Participating in the maneuvers are expert divers from the first, second and third marine regions of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corp and the first and second marine regions of the Army of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

The six-day maneuvers will include dives from helicopters, underwater destruction exercises, searches on the shores of an imaginery enemy, as well as attacks on marine installations, jetties and platforms defended by an imaginary enemy.

*** Appointments to Various Offices Announced**

94LA0038B Tehran KEYHAN-E HAVA'I in Persian 10 Nov 93 p 4

[Text] Dr. Hashemi-Golpayegani, minister of culture and higher education, issued an order appointing Dr. Mohammad Ardebili as the new supervisor of Tehran's Khajeh Nasir Tusi Industrial University.

Mohammad Sa'idi-Kiya, former minister of roads and transportation, was appointed by the chief of the Foundation for the Oppressed as this foundation's acting chief of economic affairs.

Hojjat ol-Eslam Rahimian, the vice-regent's representative and chief of the Martyr Foundation of the Islamic Revolution issued separate orders appointing Jamshid Ansari and Mohammad Baqerian as the foundation's financial and administrative deputy and financial consultant.

In separate orders from Hojjat ol-Eslam Mehdi Qa'emi, the vice-regent's representative and chief of the Ministry of Defense and Armed Forces Logistics Political-Ideological Organization, Hojjat ol-Eslam 'Ali Asghar Towhidi and Mohammad Hadi-'Ghaffuri were appointed, respectively, as this organization's cultural deputy and official in charge of aeronautic industries ideology and politics in the Ministry of Defense and Armed Forces Logistics, and they assumed their duties.

Yahya ol-Eshaq, minister of commerce, issued separate orders appointing Faridun Tala'izadeh and Mohammad Me'marzadeh-Farshchi as deputy for administrative and financial affairs and deputy for commercial services, Mahmud Karimi-Nuri and Mahmud Farhang-Tarjeman as executive director of the National Grain Organization and executive director of the Shipping Company, 'Abdol-Rasul Vos[illegible]i as general manager of budget and organizations in the Ministry of Commerce and Hasan Qalichi'ha as this ministry's supervisor of public relations.

Pakistan

Bhutto Discusses Economy, U.S. Ties

BK2112085593 Quetta BALOCHISTAN TIMES in English 17 Dec 93 pp 1, 8

[Text] Karachi—Creating jobs through industry and the social sector privatisation with a view to broadening the base of public ownership and pinning the sustainable growth of Pakistan on agriculture and population control are to be Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto government's prime objectives.

In an interview with the newsline monthly magazine of Karachi, Prime Minister Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto underlined her party's priorities as focussed on the economy.

We would like to see Pakistan come out of the international isolation in which it finds itself. Which is why we have begun to develop long term contracts with Japan, the United States, and Muslim countries to improve Pakistan's standing, she added.

Dwelling on unemployment as a major contributor to the massive drift from the rural areas into the cities she revealed that in her first month in office, the government had successes in creating 50,000 jobs.

Other areas to be looked into as part of the PPP's [Pakistan People's Party's] overalls strategy to improve the quality of life for the ordinary citizen include education health, population planning and women's development and minority affairs.

In the last three years there have been three cuts on educational spending. We feel, no matter how difficult things may be in other spheres, education should never be neglected in a budget, she stressed.

The Prime Minister urged non-governmental organisations (NGOs) to share responsibility in the welfare of the nation, by playing a key role in the social sector. We have even devised a concept of public private partnership in sectors like health and education whereby the government will raise half the equity for anyone wishing to invest the other half in a standardized school or hospital.

Reflecting back on her last time in office. Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto stressed that the situation in Pakistan today bore little resemblance with the system of government.

In this different climate, our objective now was to give Pakistan a good, clean and effective government that moves across the key spheres of foreign policy, economic development and energy production, she added.

On the anticipated 1.2 billion dollars assistance from International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank the Prime Minister said that the party has been able to convince the IMF to agree to a letter in intent in principle, which amounts to a vote of confidence for Pakistan's present economic management.

However, I am still displeased by the high levels of domestic borrowing, she said, adding firmly that within the next four years, Pakistan would see sustainable levels of inflation and unemployment.

Her government's thrust on the macro management of the economy, she explained is apparent from the focus on the Ghazi Bharoka project—the eight wonder of the world where water canals and an artificial waterfall will be made to generate 1300 megawatts of electricity.

Referring to nuclear issues, Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto reiterated that there was no question of roll back of Pakistan's Nuclear Programme.

She emphasised the problem the country had faced with the application of the Pressler Amendment, and urged that the United States ought to review whether or not the legal interpretation of Pressler is correct in its application towards Pakistan.

Our friends in America must understand that Pressler must not come in the way of relations between the two countries especially since we have cooperated so closely in facing the Soviet threat in Afghanistan.

Had it not been for the role Pakistan played, the Soviet Union would not have been weakened and the new global world order would not have come into being Pakistan should be rewarded for being the catalyst to change, the Prime Minister said.

Bhutto To Visit DPRK After PRC Visit

BK2012155293 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 1500 GMT 20 Dec 93

[Text] Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto will pay a two-day official visit to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea [DPRK] at the invitation of President Kim Il-song beginning 29 December. She will visit DPRK after her trip to the PRC. The prime minister will hold talks with DPRK leaders on international and regional issues and matters of mutual interest.

Editorials Assess Impact of GATT on Trade

GATT Called 'Challenge' for Leaders

BK1812084593 Islamabad THE NEWS in English 18 Dec 93 p 7

[Editorial: "An Unfair Deal"]

[Text] The good news is that the seven-year-long global trade negotiations under the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (Gatt) which began at the Uruguay resort, Punta del Este in September 1988, have finally ended in a comprehensive agreement. But the bad news is that the Multifibre Agreement (MFA), which puts quota restrictions on textile exports, has been allowed a ten-year lease of life. So, while most international exporters will enjoy free access to global markets under the new Gatt Agreement signed on Thursday, those exporting textiles like Pakistan, will continue to suffer restrictive incasures [as published]. Moreover, the growth rate allowed to textile exporters under the textile deal of the December 16 Agreement is also far from satisfactory. And this was only doled out when South Asian textile exporters agreed under threat of a growth-rate freeze to lower duties on imports of nylon filament and bullet-proof fibre (Pakistan), and industrial tariffs (India). Under the circumstances, it was only natural for Pakistan to be disappointed with the outcome of the Gatt talks.

Pakistan will suffer from the Agreement twice over. Its exports will be restricted because of the MFA, while its imports will shoot up because of its obligations under the Agreement to lower tariffs. Then, the possibility of Pakistan getting a share of the rice markets of South-east Asia is far too remote because the variety of rice popular with the people of South Korea and Japan is not produced here. However, we can start producing this variety. And now, since the rich countries will be lifting their massive farm subsidies, the agricultural produce of Pakistan and other developing countries will become competitive in the world markets. But to benefit, the country needs to produce a surplus of good quality crops in high demand in the global market. As a first step the government could lift all controls on prices of farm products and liberalise the import of agri-technologies that help produce better yielding seeds, minimise the need for water and lower the cost of storage and preservation. The possibility of converting the ECO [Economic Cooperation Organization] and Saarc [South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation] into free trade zones on the lines of Nafta and EEC can also be explored.

Meanwhile, efforts should be made to provide power and irrigation water, farm-to-market roads and access to basic needs. For this the government needs massive resources which can be mobilised from the agriculturists in the shape of income tax which they would not grudge if allowed to charge border prices for their produce. The decision to allow farmers to charge international prices for their produce would certainly send the domestic rate of inflation skyrocketing, increasing the burden on the middle and poorer classes. International prices are those that the exporter quotes, minus transport, freight and tariffs, etc. Then, depending on the size of the farm and the produce index, farmers can be given a domestic quota, and anything produced over and above that quota, can be sold at international rules.

The Gatt Agreement is a challenge to Pakistan's policy makers. Their response will determine our economic future. Failure to take the right decisions now will only compound the present crisis.

'Blemishes' in Deal Noted

BK1912084393 Islamabad THE NATION in English 19 Dec 93 p 6

[Editorial: "GATT Success"]

[Text] After seven tediously long years of bickering and brain-storming, the 117 member countries of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) finally came to an agreement at the Uruguay Round on new trade rules and tariff cuts. This next-to-impossible deal was struck despite the host of serious differences which existed between the US and European Community particularly on farm subsidies and between the US and Japan on the question of the latter opening up its markets to rice. Another major point of divergence was that of the US and EC's insistence on the Third World countries opening up to imports from the developed world. The one-time political North-South conflict continued to cause hassles in arriving at an amiable agreement between the members. The split occurred essentially over the developed countries' obduracy in accepting only raw materials from the South, and to make matters worse, against restrictive quotas. That

compromises had to be made was inevitable, but arriving at an agreement was a feat in itself. Pakistan and India's differences were ironed out to some extent at the eleventh hour but whether in reality they gained from the textile package, for instance, is open to question. The US and EC persisted over their demand that developing countries allow their markets to textiles and clothing from the developed world with Pakistan putting the stamp of approval on lowering duties on imports of nylon filament and bullet proof fibre, two items which may not have much of an impact on our textile sector since Pakistan in any case does not produce these commodities.

Nevertheless, the textile package deal is not without serious blemishes and textile experts have quite legitimately expressed their discontent. The Multi-Fibre Agreement is to be phased out over a period of ten long years, and even though this is a reduction in the period of time of the original fifteen years, the most significant quotas and restrictions will be done away with only at the end of ten years. The again there is the apprehension that the US and EC will remove impediments initially on the less important products and only later will they do so on more important items. The agreement will undoubtedly pave the way for boosting exports of non-traditional products. Were developing countries to actually make their domestic markets more accessible to foreign imports, it may have an extremely undesirable effect on their productivity. The worrying aspect as regards our textile exports is whether, once exposed to growing competition in the international arena, our textiles can come up to the market in terms of quality. Much needs to be done on this score. In the final analysis, the answer seems to lie in Pakistan and other countries in the region forming a trading group on similar lines as NAFTA and other blocs rapidly emerging in the developed world. This would be one sure way of securing our interests in the global trading scenario.

Indian Forces Fire Across Line of Control

BK2012153993 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 1500 GMT 20 Dec 93

[Text] A youth was killed when Indian forces fired across the Line of Control [LOC] at the civilian population of a border village in Azad Kashmir today. Reports say that Indian forces started firing automatic weapons at (Polas) village in the (Cherikot) sector at noon today. A youth, Mohammad Tauhid, died on the spot after he was hit in the neck.

It may be mentioned here that incidents of unprovoked firing by Indian forces on the rural population along the LOC are increasing daily. Many people—including women, children, and infants—have died as a result.

Foreign Minister Postpones Kabul Mediation Trip

BK2112092893 Hong Kong AFP in English 0924 GMT 21 Dec 93

[Text] Islamabad, Dec 21 (AFP)—Pakistani Foreign Minister Sardar Asif Ahmad Ali has postponed a trip to Kabul aimed at mediating between rival Afghan leaders, a foreign office official said Tuesday [21 December].

Ali was scheduled to leave for Kabul on Thursday to attempt a reconciliation between various factions including President Borhanoddin Rabbani, Prime Minister Golboddin Hekmatyar and former defence minister Ahmad Shah Masood.

He told reporters here Sunday that Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto had advised him to undertake the mission following requests from "our worthy friends Saudi Arabia, Turkey and Iran" to bring about peace in Afghanistan.

"The trip has been postponed," a foreign office official told AFP, giving no reason but saying it would be "rescheduled."

Masood, allied with Rabbani, is fighting Hekmatyar's troops in eastern and northeastern districts of Kabul.

Cabinet Reviews Economic Recovery Measures

BK2012143893 Islamabad PTV Television Network in English 1400 GMT 20 Dec 93

[Text] The foreign exchange reserves of the country have increased three fold during the last two months. This was stated at a meeting of the federal cabinet held in Islamabad today under the chairmanship of Prime Minister Ms. Benazir Bhutto. The foreign exchange reserves on the 19th of October this year when the present government took over stood at $338 million. They have now gone up to $1,048 million. Similarly, the government had overdraft of 27 billion rupees on 19th of October which has now been brought down under the IMF ceiling of less than 10 million rupees in two months. This will help reduce the budget deficit and bring down the inflation rate in the country.

The cabinet was also apprised of difficulties in the recovery of outstanding dues from defaulters of taxes, loans of banks and DFI's [Development Financial Institutions] utility charges. Taxes to the tune of 1.29 billion rupees have been recovered up to 30 November 1993, out of a total outstanding 6.15 billion arrears of rupees. Some new legal measures have been taken to accelerate the recovery of this stuck-up loans of banks and Development Financial Institutions. It includes authorizing the corporate law authority to appoint administrators in (?four) credit companies and to make defaulters of loan ineligible for appointment as directors of companies.

The cabinet was also informed that out of the total loans outstanding to one million rupees and above as on 30th June 1993 aggregated to over 77.385 billion rupees. The

loans recovered up to 19th of October 1993 were 100 crore rupees, which have risen to 112 crore rupees on 19th of December this year. A number of measures have been initiated for the recovery of outstanding dues on account of electricity, water, gas and telephone and the results will be informed to the cabinet at its next meeting.

The press assistant to the prime minister, Mr. Hussain Haqqani, informed newsmen about the decisions of the cabinet at a news briefing. He said the cabinet meeting, which spread over two hours, considered the difficulties faced by the public in depositing the utility bills and directed the Ministry of Finance to look into the possibility of opening of special booths in all branches of nationalized banks. The possibility of utility payments through some special postal stamps and bonds could also be considered so that general public had not to wait for hours in long queues for making payment of the utility bills. Some discount could also be offered on utility bills if the big users opted to pay their bills in advance for three to six months.

The cabinet was also briefed about the foreign policy of Pakistan and improvement in Pakistan's relations with several foreign countries ever since the present government took over two months ago.

Defense Council Discusses Security Plans

BK2012112393 Karachi DAWN in English 20 Dec 93 pp 1, 9

[Text] Islamabad, Dec 19—A high level meeting of the Defence Council held here on Sunday [19 December] examined a number of new military projects and acquisition of arms from abroad.

Informed sources told DAWN that the meeting which was presided over by Minister for Defence Mir Aftah Shaban Mirani approved various projects for the three services.

Prime Minister's Adviser on Fiance and Economic Affairs and secretary, Ministry of Finance Qazi Alimullah also attended the meeting and discussed the funding requirements of the army, the air force and the navy.

Foreign Minister Sardar Asif Ahmad Ali, chairman of Joint Chief of Staff Committee, chief of all the three services, Secretary Defence and other high leval officials attended the meeting.

Sources said the Defence Committee of the Cabinet (DCC) would meet on Dec 21 to give approval to the new military projects and purchase of weapons from China, Sweden and France.

Sources said the Defence Council discussed in detail the issue of acquiring frigates in the light of the United States decision to get back its "Destroyers", after the expiry of the lease.

Chinese government is believed to have offered to Pakistan frigates on cocessional rates compared to Swaden and France. "The matter was discussed threadbare and we would be finalising it at the DCC meeting being held on Dec 21", said a participant of the meeting.

Sources said that the Prime Minister's Advisor on Finance informed the meeting that the Government would not hesitate to offer substantial funds for defence purposes.

V.A. Jaffery, sources added, pointed out that Pakistan could not afford to be careless about her defence in the light of deployment of Indian troops on borders and purchase of more weapons from America, Russia, France and Britain.

Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto's proposed visit to China also came up for discussion, during which the two countries would discuss military cooperation besides enhancing economic relations.

The non-availability of weapon and spare parts from the United States because of Pressler Amendment was causing unrest among the services and the sources said the Defence Council was of the view that Pakistan should go for defence purchases from China and other countries without caring for US pressure in this behalf.

The Defence Council also discussed security threats in the region specially after Indian government's decision to deploy more than one third of its forces in Occupied Kashmir and on Pakistani border.

Sources said the Defence Minister told the participants that Pakistan's three services were fully alert to face any aggression from across the border.

He said Pakistan would not reduce its defence spending keeping in view the India's massive build up of arms. Mr Shaban Mirani was quoted as having said that the Government would fulfil all requirements of the three services.